Wildcat! 4

wcGATE Sysop Guide

wcGATE

(07/01/94 printing)

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Mustang Software, Inc. strongly believes in providing quality software at a reasonable price. We back our products with technical help when our registered users need it. Please send in your registration card to enroll in our technical support plan.

Until we receive your registration information, our staff cannot provide you with technical support via our BBS or by phone.

Benefits of sending your registration

- Free technical support by phone Monday through Friday between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Pacific time
- Automatic notification of major program updates
- Additional program updates at a reduced rate
- 24-hour access to the private multi-line Registered User's HQ BBS at Mustang Software
- BBS access to download utility programs written by MSI staff and other authors which enhance and add features

Technical Support Services

wcGATE is designed to be easy to use, and this manual should contain the answers to most of your questions. Read it first. Make use of the F1 help key for tips and explanations. If you're still stumped, technical support is only a phone call away.

MSI HQ! BBS

You may first want to call our private *Wildcat!* BBS for Registered Users at 805-873-2400, and leave a quick question for our technical staff. This is a particularly useful way to receive expert guidance with the more advanced features.

Online services

CompuServe

Another alternative is CompuServe where we are a part of the PC Vendor Support Forum. You reach us by typing GO PCVENA and then selecting SubTopic 9.

GEnie

You can also find us on GEnie, the on-line service from General Electric. Go to the MUSTANG RoundTable with the command MOVE 680.

America Online

MSI's support section on America Online is called MUSTANG and can be reached with the keyword MUSTANG.

Internet

For technical support via Internet, write to support@mustang.com.

Voice support

If you are still unable to find the answer to a question—or if you need a quick explanation, please call us Monday to Friday between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Pacific time at 805-873-2550.

When calling for support please:

- Have your registration number handy (it is printed inside the front cover of your *Wildcat!* manual).
- Record your Registration number here:

  _____

- Be at your computer with your manual handy.
- Be ready to describe the problem in detail.
- If possible, be ready to duplicate the problem on your system.

- You can call technical support directly at (805) 873-2550.

Support is not available by mail or FAX.

MSI SupportNET

We also have a large number of BBS systems carrying the MSI SupportNET echo conferences throughout the US and Canada, and around the world. These BBSs can be found in the United Kingdom, Holland, Australia, France, and Norway. The MSI SupportNET contact points outside the U.S. are:

Location	Distributor	BBS Phone
Australia	Banksia Info. Tech.	+61 2-418-7693
France	Maxotex	+33 1-45-34-6430
Scandinavia	PC Security	+47 2-58-3358
United Kingdom	Telesystems	+44 49-489-1903

Questions Other Than Technical Support

If you have questions related to shipping or other areas handled by our office staff you should contact us at 805-873-2500. Our office personnel can help with changes to your registration information and handle all non-support questions regarding our product line.

We also have a toll-free number for questions regarding new product purchases or updates. Just call 1-800-999-9619. Our mailing address is Mustang Software, Inc., P.O. Box 2264, Bakersfield, CA 93303.

Software Updates

wcGATE is constantly undergoing enhancements and revisions. This is normal software maintenance. We encourage you to keep your software updated—we can provide the best support to users who are running the current major release. The cost is minimal and the benefits are great.

Where can I find more information?

This is only a surface discussion of message networking, especially concerning the Internet. A full discussion is well beyond the scope of a single manual. For more detailed and complete information on the Internet, some additional reading may be necessary. The following publications may prove helpful to users and system administrators:

Using UUCP and Usenet by Grace Todino & Dale Dougherty, O'Reilly & Associates, Inc. ISBN: 0-937175-10-2. This book shows users how to communicate with both UNIX and non-UNIX systems using UUCP, and how to read news and post articles. Clear enough for a novice, the book is packed with information that even experienced users will find indispensable. To order call 800-998-9938 or 1-707-829-0515.

Managing UUCP and Usenet by Tim O'Reilly & Grace Todino, O'Reilly & Associates, Inc. ISBN: 0-937175-93-5. This book is for system administrators who want to install and manage UUCP and Usenet software. To order call 800-998-9938 or 1-707-829-0515.

Internet for Dummies by Levine & Boroudi, IDG Books Worldwide, ISBN: 156-884-0241. The "For Dummies" series of books take a light-hearted yet down-to-earth approach to personal computers and applications, clearing away the techno-speak and providing everything you *really* need to know. Available from your local computer bookstore.

Internet World published monthly by Mecklermedia Corporation, ISSN: 1064-3923. Internet World is an excellent source of information for the Internet user. It can help you to locate a host site and contains articles on how to get the most out of an Internet connection.

The MSI HQ BBS at (805) 873-2400 has many text files and utilities to assist you in setting up *wcGATE*, and introducing you to network culture and "netiquette". An entire file area is devoted to Echomail network information files and host sites.

About the manual

This manual describes *wcGATE* operation and features at the time of publication, and does not reflect changes made to the program after the manual was completed. Be sure to check the README file on your *wcGATE* installation disks. This file contains important information about last-minute changes in the program, additional features, and errors or omissions in the manual.

Typographic Conventions

The following type styles are used throughout this manual to represent keys you press and information you type. Note the difference in appearance between a Zero "0" and the uppercase Oh "O".

Displayed	What this means and what you should do
[ENTER]	This represents a key you should press
[ALT] [Z]	This is a combination key. Hold down the [ALT] key, then press the indicated key.
CD \WILDCAT	This indicates a DOS command for you to type exactly as shown. Remember to press your [ENTER] key after each line.
Click	This means a single press of the left mouse button.
Double Click	This means two rapid clicks of the left mouse button.
Drag	Move the mouse pointer over the item you wish to select, then click and hold the left mouse button while you move the mouse to the location desired.

1 - Introduction

The possession of a book becomes a substitute for reading it.

Anthony Burgess

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What is *wcGATE*?

wcGATE is a multi-purpose network mail gateway for *Wildcat!* BBS. It supports QWK, UUCP and MHS mail. It allows you to import and export mail from your BBS in several different formats, and offers compatibility with BBS mail via QWK packets, Network Email systems via MHS, and USENET and Internet mail via UUCP.

QWK

QWK packet network mail is based on off-line mail handling technology originally developed by Mark "Sparky" Herring. It is an extension to the off-line mail capability built into *Wildcat!*, and allows you to exchange mail with other Bulletin Board Systems using QWK mail packets.

wcGATE QWK packet mail is compatible with most other QWK-compatible mail systems for *Wildcat!* and other types of BBS software.

UUCP

UUCP is an acronym for "UNIX to UNIX Copy Program". This protocol allows UNIX systems to transmit files, including newsgroups and E-Mail messages, from one machine to another.

This UUCP implementation incorporates a subset of the UUCP protocol, allowing E-mail and newsgroups to be transmitted to and from a UNIX system and a *Wildcat!* BBS.

MHS

Novell's Message Handling Service (MHS) provides an ideal medium for interchanging messages from a variety of different applications, including *Wildcat!*.

MHS mail allows you to share E-mail messages between *Wildcat!* and any MHS-compatible E-mail application, whether the BBS is connected to the LAN or not. Two or more *Wildcat!* systems running *wcGATE* can also share, or "echo" entire message conferences using MHS mail.

Installation

wcGATE comes with an installation program that automatically creates the necessary directories, and copies the program and support files you select to the correct location. You cannot install *wcGATE* simply by copying the files from the installation diskettes to your hard drive since the files are stored in compressed format.

You can use the installation program for an initial installation, or to re-install your *wcGATE* software. Before you begin installing *wcGATE*, we strongly recommend that you make a backup copy of the installation diskettes and keep them in a safe place. Review your DOS manual for help if you are unsure how to make backup copies of your diskettes.

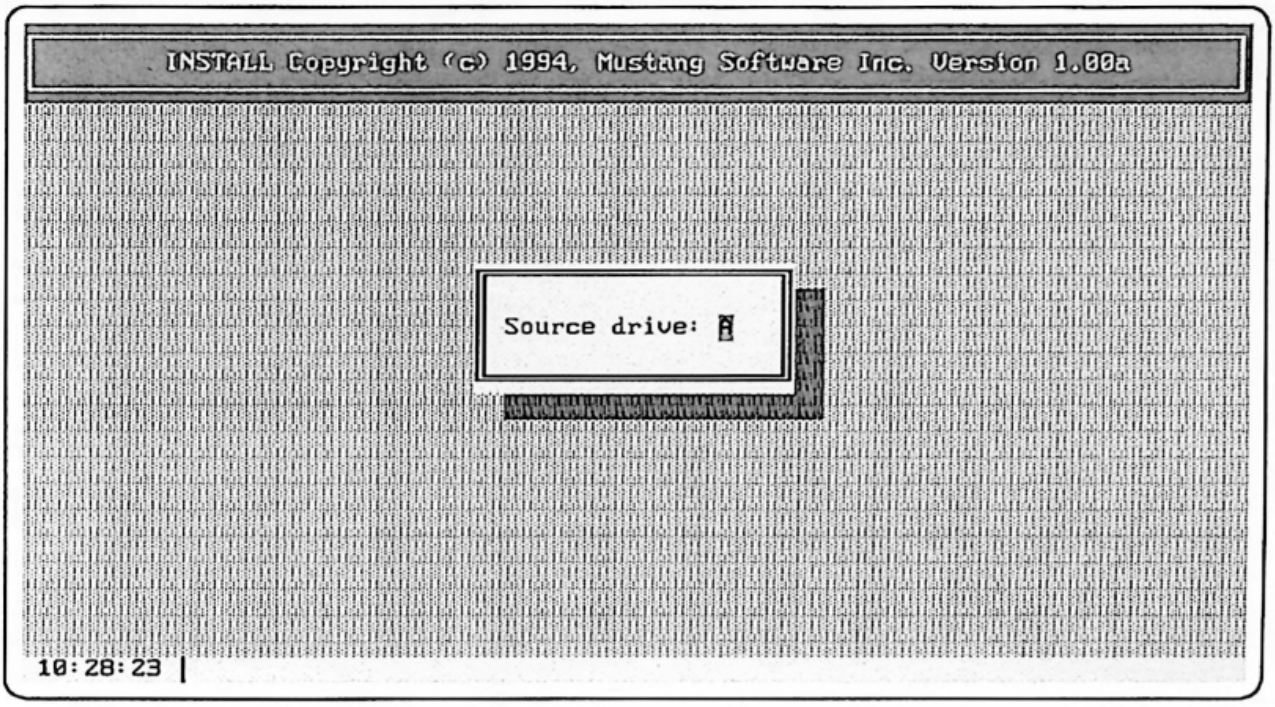
To install *wcGATE*, place the disk labeled "INSTALL" in your floppy drive and type

```
A: ENTER
```

If you are installing from a different drive, enter the proper drive letter. Then type

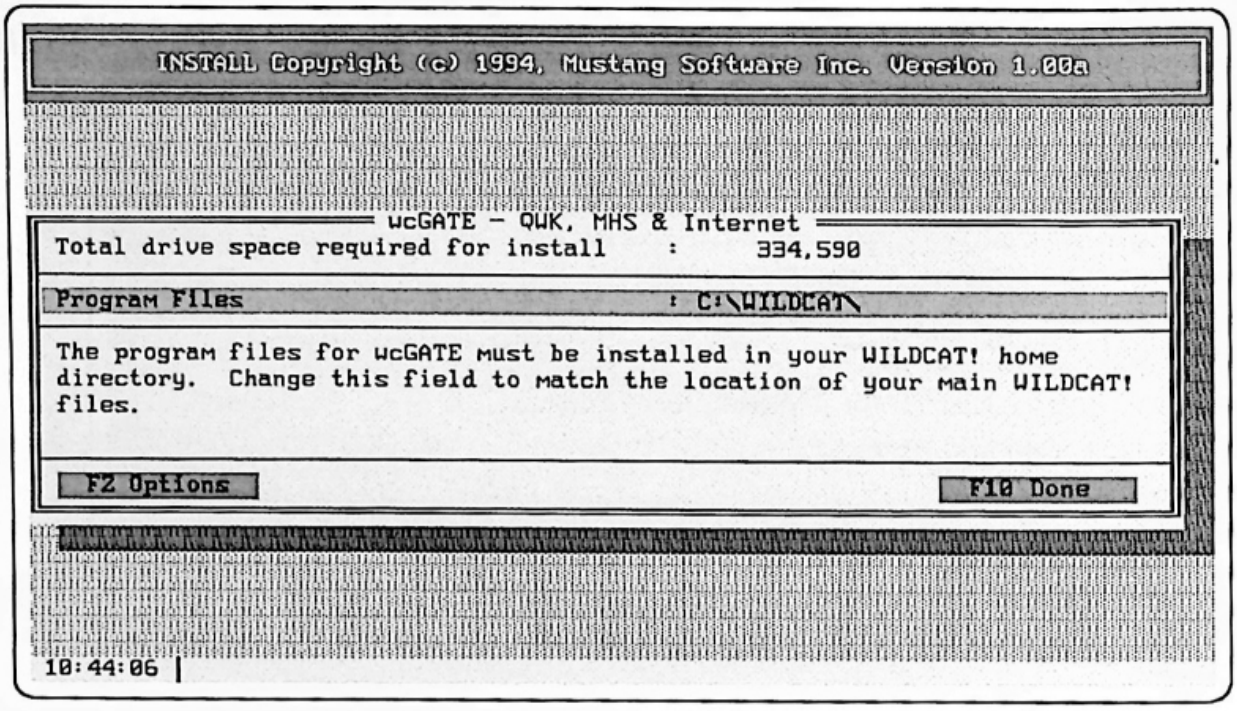
```
GATEINST ENTER
```

Your screen should now look something like this:



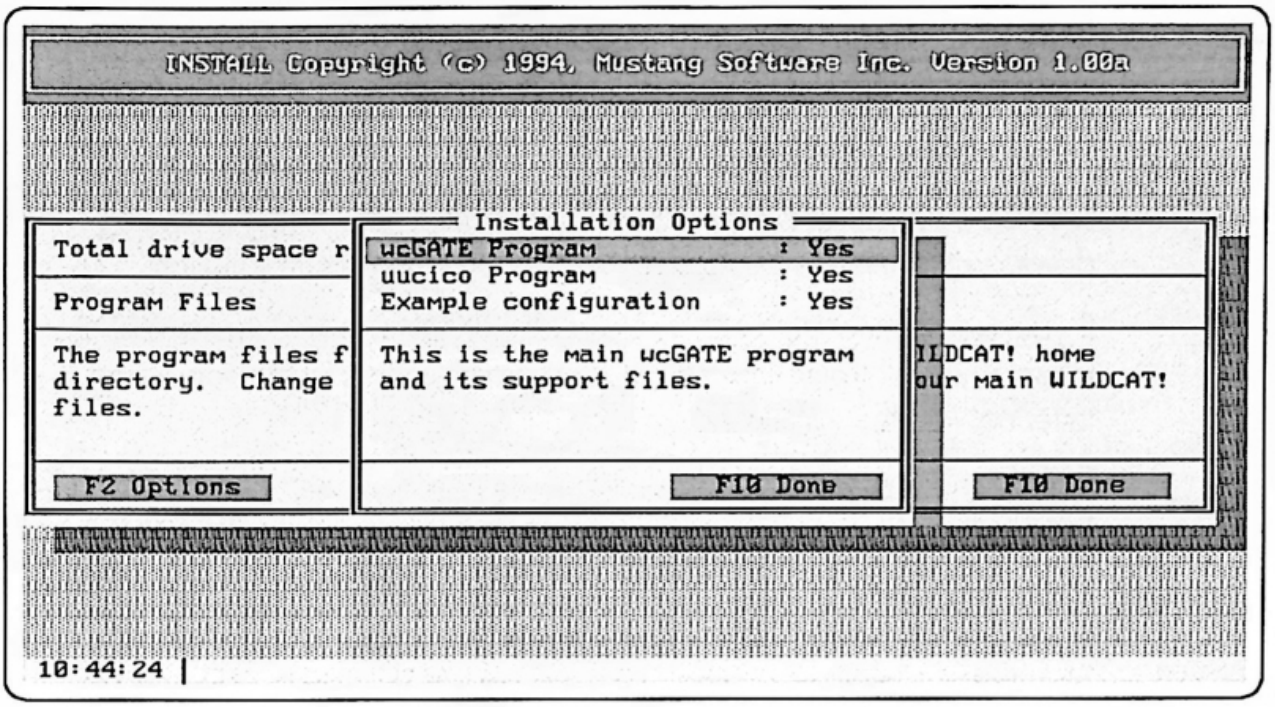
Source Drive is the drive letter from which you will be installing *wcGATE*. If you are installing from diskettes in floppy drive A:, enter A in this box. If you are installing from drive B:, enter B, and so on. Press ENTER to continue.

The next screen will show you the amount of drive space required for the installation, and allows you to select which files you want to install at this time. A help window provides additional information about the files you are selecting.



The correct place to install all *wcGATE* Program files is your *Wildcat!* home directory. The default directory is C:\WILDCAT\. If you have installed *Wildcat!* on a different drive or subdirectory, enter the correct information here.

The default installation installs *all* program and support files, and this is the recommended procedure for a first-time installation. Press F2 to see installation options for each set of files. As with the previous window, the Installation Options screen explains each option. Use your ↑ and ↓ keys to move the selection bar up and down the list, and press ENTER to change each option. Notice how the help information changes as you move the selection bar.



When you have finished selecting installation options, press F10 to return to the main installation screen. Press F10 again to begin the installation.

The installation process will copy the program files to your *Wildcat!* home directory, and will create any required subdirectories for configuration and support files. The paths created are the proper location for configuration and support files, and shouldn't be altered.

The installation program may ask you to insert additional diskettes to complete the installation process. Each original diskette is clearly labelled. The installation program will display additional screens of tips and information while the *wcGATE* files are being copied to your hard drive.

In some cases, changes may have been made to the program after the manuals were printed. The final screen displayed by the installation program shows you important information on last-minute changes to the program or documentation. You have the option to print this file right now. We recommend you do so, and keep the printed copy with your *wcGATE* User Guide for future reference.

What to do if you have problems installing *wcGATE*

If you have problems installing *wcGATE*, here are a few things to check before calling Technical Support.

First, be sure you are installing *wcGATE* from DOS. If you are using Windows, exit Windows completely before beginning the installation.

If you are running DESQview, close all DESQview windows before installation. This will insure that no other program running at the same time is interfering with the installation.

If you think you may have bad diskettes, try to use both sets of media before calling Technical Support. *wcGATE* is provided on both 5¼" and 3½" diskettes. It is uncommon for both sets of diskettes to be defective.

If you are still having difficulty after trying these tips, or if you're just unsure about the installation process, you can call MSI Technical Support for assistance.

Other programs you may need

wcGATE comes with all the programs and utilities you need to configure *Wildcat!* to send and receive mail packets from other systems. You may need additional software programs to transport the mail packets to and from your *Wildcat!* system and your host.

MHS mail

In order to exchange mail packets with other MHS applications, *wcGATE* requires NetWare MHS version 1.5, which routes the MHS mail packets locally over the LAN, or remotely via a modem connection.

If you will be exchanging messages between *Wildcat!* and an MHS-compatible E-mail program, you may also need to obtain an MHS gateway for your E-mail program.

You can purchase NetWare MHS from your NetWare reseller. Contact the vendor for your LAN E-mail package for information on MHS gateways.

QWK mail

You will need some kind of communication software program to dial your QWK mail host to exchange mail packets. A good scripting language is strongly recommended if you want to automate your sessions.

MSI recommends QmodemPro for your general purpose communication needs. DOS and Windows versions are available. The built-in script language is powerful and easy to use, and several example mail scripts are available for download from the MSI HQ BBS.

Special pricing on QmodemPro is available to registered owners of *Wildcat!* BBS — contact MSI Sales at 800-999-9619 or 805-873-2500 for details.

You will also need one or more "Packers", or file compression utilities, to create and read QWK-style mail packets. The most commonly-used packer is PKZIP/PKUNZIP from PKWARE. You can download the latest Shareware version of PKZIP/PKUNZIP from MSI HQ BBS, as

PKZ204G.EXE. This is a self-extracting file which, when run in a subdirectory, will create all the necessary utility programs and documentation files, along with registration and payment information.

UUCP mail

wcGATE comes complete with nearly everything you need for UUCP mail. It includes UUCICO.EXE, a communication program with UUCP protocol, which automatically calls your host and exchanges mail packets.

The only additional program you will need is a text editor to create and maintain the configuration files required by UUCICO.EXE. Recent versions of MS-DOS come with a full-screen text editor called "EDIT", and while it's nothing fancy, this may be all you need for simple tasks like batch files. EDIT has comprehensive on-line help, and recognizes a variety of editing and cursor movement commands familiar to users of WordStar and MS-Word.

Another good choice is QEdit, from Semware. This very popular shareware editor is renowned for its speed and its ability to edit many files at the same time. You can find the latest version of QEdit at the MSI HQ BBS. The current version at the time this manual was printed is QEDIT3.ZIP.

2 -Overview

Fanaticism consists in redoubling your effort when you have forgotten your aim.

George Santayana

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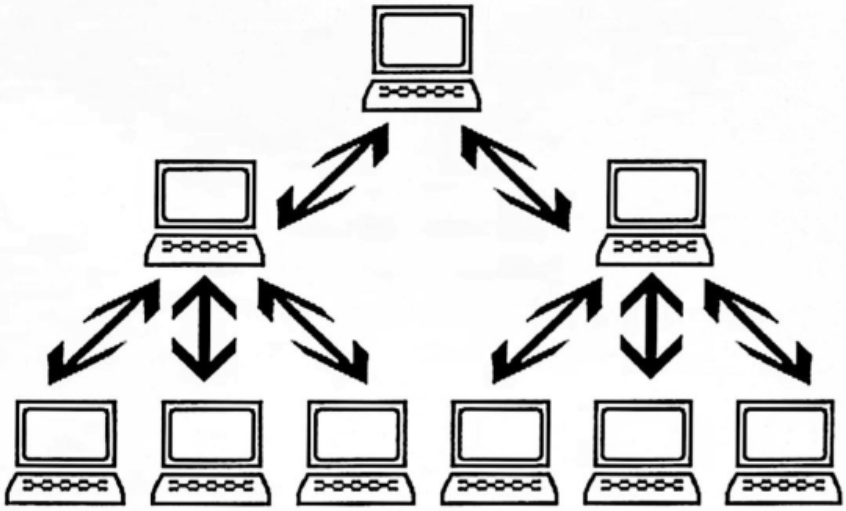
Hubs and nodes

While they may differ in detail, all types of mail networks follow the same general organization. A typical network consists of a host, or hub, connected to one or more nodes, and is shaped something like an inverted tree.



At the top of the tree is the hub. At the bottom of the tree are nodes. In larger networks, there may be three or more levels of hubs and nodes. Nodes in levels between the top and the bottom serve double duty as "regional hubs" or collection points, from which they forward mail originating at lower levels, up to a higher level. Every message in the network makes its way up to the hub, and back down to other nodes.

What's the difference between Email and Echomail?

There are two kinds of electronic mail: public Echomail, and personal Email. These two kinds of mail have a lot of similarities to real mail — the kind the post office delivers.

Public Echomail can be compared to supermarket flyers delivered to everyone on your street. This mail isn't addressed to anyone in particular, and

is meant to be read by anyone in your household who might be interested in it. Personal Email is addressed to you personally, and goes only to you, not to your neighbors or anyone else on your street.

Routing the mail

To send private mail, the sender and recipient must have an Email address to which the mail software can route their messages. The actual path the message takes can vary, depending on the complexity of the network, and the sophistication of the software.

It is usually not necessary for your callers to specify the exact path a message must take to reach its destination — the mail software takes care of that, and "remembers" the name and location of each caller who posts messages on the network. As long as the mail is properly addressed to a user at a site on the network, the message will eventually reach its destination.

This message routing works reliably with MHS and UUCP mail, but it is not as reliable, or as well supported, in different kinds of QWK mail programs, because no clear standard exists for network addressing and message routing in the current QWK specifications. As long as all the hubs and nodes in a system are running *Wildcat!* BBS, private message routing works well, but other implementations of QWK mail for non-*Wildcat!* systems may support routed mail differently, or not at all.

Is private mail really private?

Once it leaves your BBS, probably not. In fact, there is no such thing as truly private mail between systems. Although an Email system may offer some form of encryption or other security for private messages, as soon as those messages leave their "home" application, they must be translated into a format that other applications can handle.

On a BBS, anyone with Sysop access can read any message on the BBS. Any individual with physical access to machines and drives where the BBS resides can view the contents of directories and files.

The security of private E-mail messages on Local Area Networks depends partly on whatever level of security is built into the E-mail application, and partly on the level of access network users have for drives and directories on the LAN. A LAN user with supervisor access can view the contents of

any file, so the security of private E-mail in that case depends on message file encryption.

As with LAN E-mail, UUCP mail may or may not be secure, depending on the type of host system through which it passes. High-level users may have access to drives and directories where they can inspect the contents of any file. The main impediment to casual file browsing on a UUCP system is the sheer volume of mail that passes through a typical UUCP host.

None of these E-mail systems should be considered secure for communications that must remain confidential, and your callers should be advised that computer networks are generally not the place for any communications that must remain completely secure.

Certain kinds of messages will not be exported by *wcGATE*:

- Messages whose subject begins with "NE:" (for "no echo")
- Deleted (killed) messages
- Messages forwarded on-line in *Wildcat!*

Addressing E-Mail messages off-line

Most off-line QWK packet readers limit input in the "To" and "Subject" fields of a message to only 25 characters. In many cases this is not enough space to enter the full Internet or MHS mailing address of the person you are corresponding with, and long subject lines are truncated.

The solution to this problem is simply to put the To: and Subject: information in the first two lines of the message *text*, like this:

```
   From : GWEN BARNES
     To : Alan F.
Subject : Message
    (----+----1----+----2----+----3----+----4----+----5----+
  1: To: alan.fuerbringer@mustang.com
  2: Subject: Test of extended to and subject fields
  3:

<the body of the message would go here>
```

Processing mail, step by step

Regardless of the kind of mail you want to send from your BBS, the procedure is the same. You shut down one node of the BBS for an event, unless you have a dedicated node for mail processing, then start *wcGATE* to export any outgoing mail, call your host, upload outgoing mail to the host, download new incoming mail, import new mail with *wcGATE* and restart the BBS.

Depending on the type and urgency of the mail, your scheduled mail event might be once or twice a day, or after each call using POSTCALL.BAT. For particularly urgent mail, or for processing large volumes of mail, you may consider dedicating a machine to full-time mail processing.

3 - Preparing *Wildcat!*

The new electronic interdependence recreates the world in the image of a global village.

Marshall McLuhan

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In this chapter, we'll discuss in general terms how to set up your *Wildcat!* BBS to send and receive mail with *wcGATE*.

The first step: *MAKEWILD*

The first thing you must do when you set your *Wildcat!* system up for network mail is to define conferences in *Wildcat!* to receive the messages. Until you do this, you will not be able to add conferences to the configuration program *MAKEGATE*.

Start *MAKEWILD* in your WILDCAT directory, and go to the **General Information** screen. Adjust the **Number of message areas** to allow for the new conferences you will be importing. It does no harm to round this number up to the next 100 or so to provide some room for future expansion.

When you change the number of message areas, *MAKEWILD* must resize some of its configuration files. A window will pop up, showing the amount of disk space required, and available, for the conversion. Answer Yes to resize the data files. Depending on the original size of the databases, this procedure could take some time.

Your next step is to define the conferences. Go to the **Conference Areas** screen and begin creating the new conferences you need. It's much easier to do this if you have already printed out a list of conference names from your host.

It's always a good idea to give some thought to the organization, naming and numbering of conferences, particularly if you are adding a large number of echoes or newsgroups. Consider leaving gaps consisting of blank conferences between networks, and between groups of unrelated conferences or newsgroups, so that more may be added later. This not only makes maintenance easier for the system operator, it makes it easier for users as well to find conferences and newsgroups that suit their interests.

Select the proper **Conference message type** according to the kind of mail you will be importing.

```
Makewild Copyright (c) 1991,94 Mustang Software, Inc. Version 4.0MPB Rev 'E'
                    Editing Conference uucp email
Conference name                        : uucp email
Conference short name                  : UUCP email
Conference sysop                       :
Conference message type                : Internet Email, private only
Check for valid name                   : No
Maximum number of messages
                                         Mail Type
Bulletins path                           Normal mail, public and private
Questionnaires path                      Normal mail, public only
Menus path                               Normal mail, private only
Help files path                          Fido Netmail, private only
Display files path                       Internet Email, private only
Message path                             Usenet Newsgroup, public to ALL
Message attach path                    : C:\WILDCAT\ATTACH\
- Conference toggle settings -
[F2 Pick] [F4 Doors] [F5 Profiles] [F7 File Areas] [F10 Done]
06-01-94 | [F1] Help [↑↓] Select field [F10] Done [ESC] Exit | 11:06:10
```

Type of mail	Conference mail type setting
QWK	Normal mail, public only or Normal mail, public and private
MHS Email	Normal mail, private only
MHS Mail	Normal mail, private only
MHS Echo	Normal mail, public only or Normal mail, public and private
Usenet Newsgroup	Usenet Newsgroup, public to ALL
Internet Email	Internet Email, private only

Don't forget to edit the **Conference short name** to provide meaningful abbreviations of the conference name — *Wildcat!*'s off-line mail program *wcMAIL* uses this information for callers' mail packets. Adjust the conference paths, if necessary, and go to **Conference toggle settings**.

The following toggles are correct for most applications. Note that some toggles are optional. The correct settings for these items will depend on regulations and policies of your BBS and the networks.

```
Makewild Copyright (c) 1991,94 Mustang Software, Inc. Version 4.0MPB Rev 'E'
                    Editing Conference uucp email
 Menus path                          : C:\WILDCAT\MENU\
 Help files path                     : C:\WILDCAT\HELP\
 Display files path                  : C:\WILDCAT\DISP\
 Message path                        : C:\WILDCAT\MSG\
 Message attach path                 : C:\WILDCAT\ATTACH\
- Conference toggle settings
 Allow message attachments           : Y
 Prompt to kill received attachment  : Y
 Allow return receipts               : N
 Prompt to kill received messages    : Y
 Allow carbon copies                 : N
 Allow high ASCII characters         : N
 Require alias names                 : N
 Use long address headers            : Y
 Show CTRL lines in messages         : N

   F2 Pick    F4 Doors    F5 Profiles    F7 File Areas    F10 Done

06-01-94 |  [F1] Help  [↑↓] Select field  [F10] Done  [ESC] Exit  | 11:16:50
```

Conference Toggles	QWK	MHS	UUCP
Allow message attachments	Optional	Optional	Optional
Prompt to kill received attachment	Optional	Optional	Optional
Allow return receipts	N	N	N
Prompt to kill received messages	Optional	Optional	Optional
Allow carbon copies	N	N	N
Allow high ASCII characters	Optional	Optional	N
Require alias names	Optional	N	N
Use long address headers	N	Y	Y
Show CTRL lines in messages	N	N	Optional

Don't forget to use the F5 Profiles button to give your callers access to these new conferences. You may also want to extend file area access to your conferences.

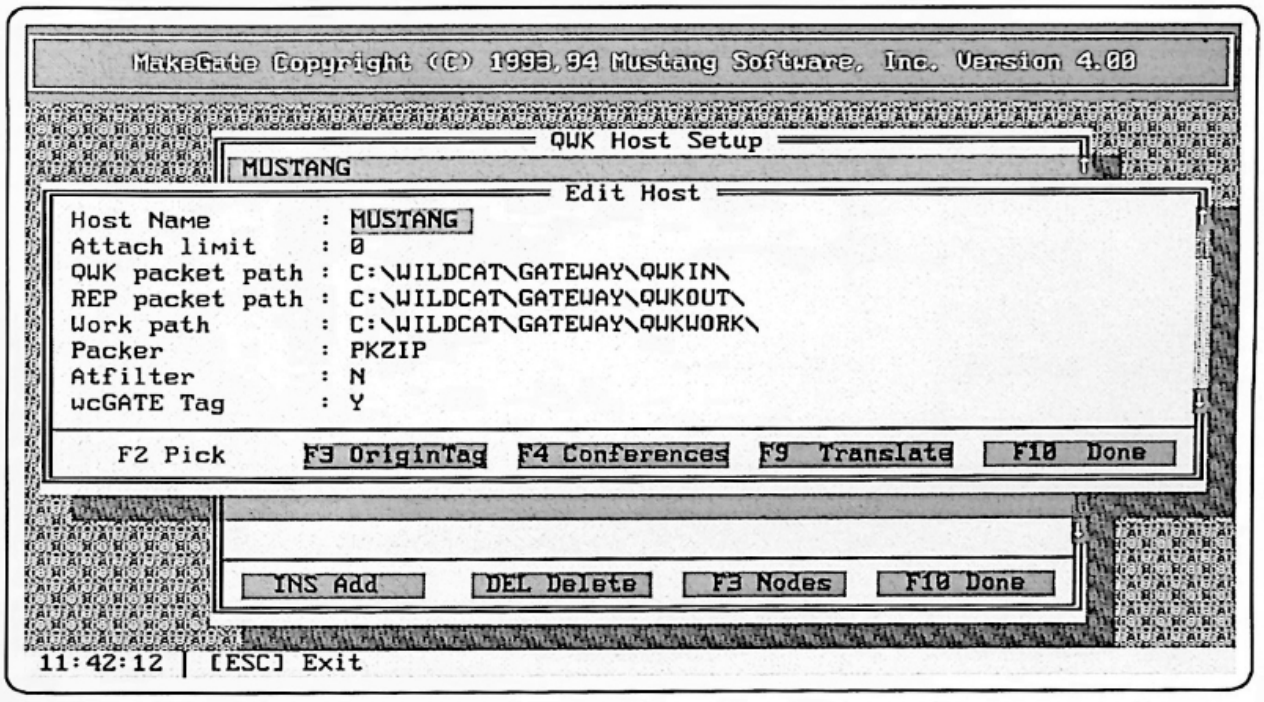
Once you have created the conferences in *MAKEWILD*, you can then set up your hubs in *MAKEGATE*.

Introducing *MAKEGATE*

The main configuration program for *wcGATE* is called *MAKEGATE*. It shares a common interface with most other *Wildcat!* utilities such as *MAKEWILD*, so much of the terminology, and the data entry procedures, will already be familiar.

We'll introduce you to the general operation of *MAKEGATE* here, then we'll go over the details of setting up QWK, MHS and UUCP conferences in the chapters that follow.

Defining hosts



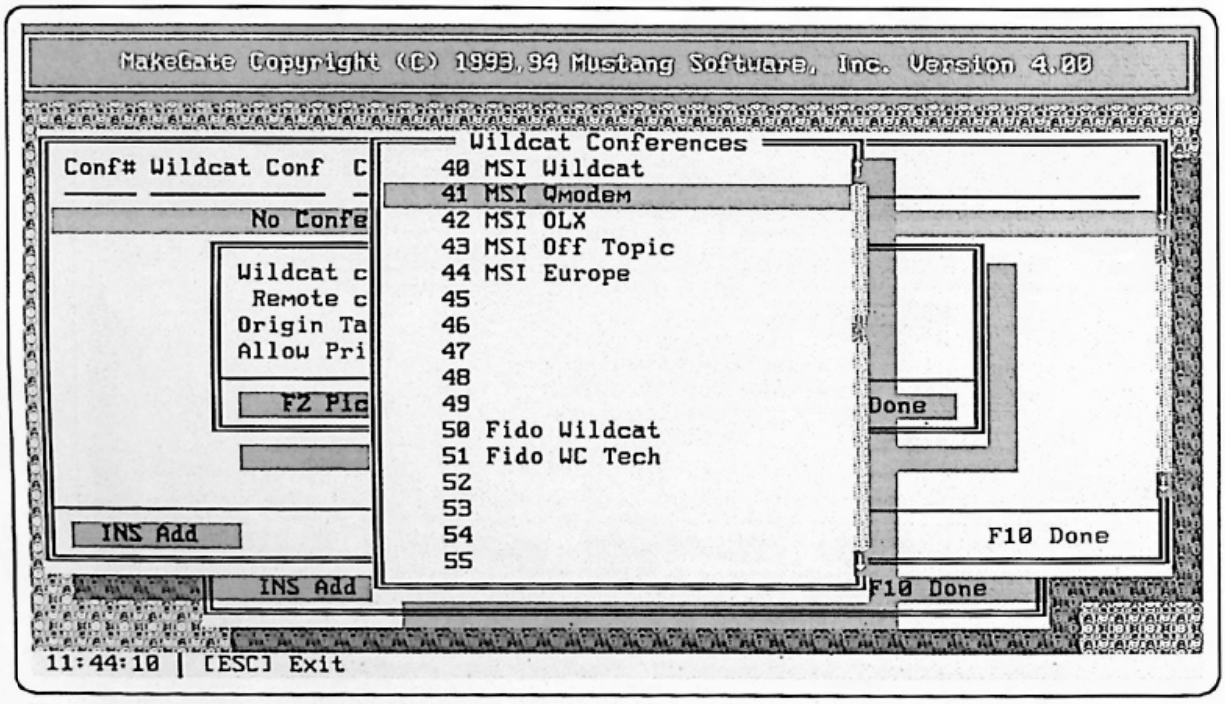
A Host is a system that distributes mail to other sites. For QWK mail, the host is usually another BBS. For MHS mail, the host is a public or private MHS hub. For UUCP mail, the host is a UUCP provider.

Each host is identified by name. For QWK mail, the host name is the filename of the QWK packets you download, for instance EXECNET. For

MHS mail, the host name is the name of the hub, for instance MUSTANG or NHUB. For UUCP, the host name is the provider's site name, for instance HOLONET.

You use *MAKEGATE* to define each host. Host information includes the host name, paths for incoming and outgoing mail packets, *Wildcat!* conferences to use, and name translation. Some mail types have additional options, which are discussed in the chapters that follow.

Defining conferences



The *Wildcat!* conferences you created must be matched up with the corresponding conferences from your host. For QWK and UUCP, *MAKEGATE* makes this easy by reading conference configuration files from your host as well as conference information from *Wildcat!*, and presenting the information on a selection list.

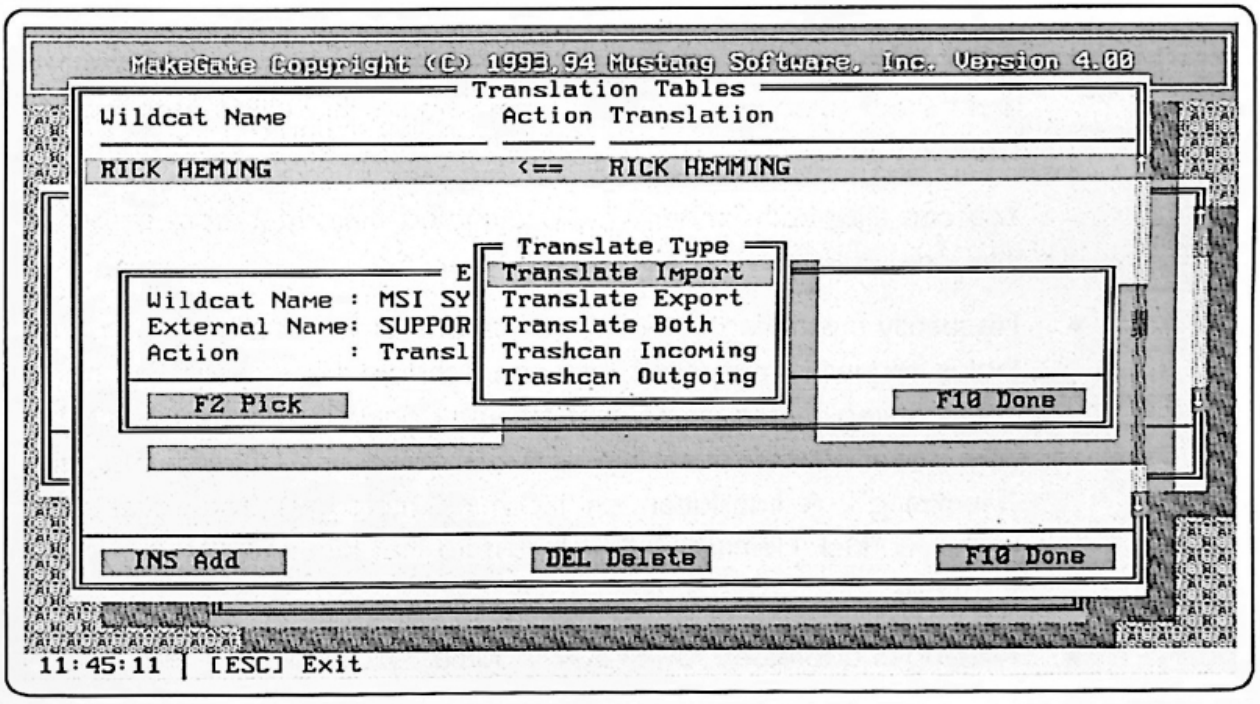
Since the number of USENET newsgroups is apt to be very large, *MAKEGATE* has a search function for UUCP conference configuration.

Errorlevel Testing

wcGATE exits with the following errorlevels, which you can test for in a batch file:

0	Normal termination
1	Fatal error
10	Messages were exported.

Name translation



Each mail type has a configuration section for translation and filtering. You can change a caller's name in the To and From fields of incoming or out-

going messages, or reject messages addressed to or from any person you specify.

Why would I need to translate names?

- "Generic" E-mail addresses. If you use message networks to provide product support and sales information to customers at other sites, you may want to publish a "generic" e-mail address such as SALES or SUPPORT, and translate the generic name to the real name of someone at your site who can answer the messages. That way, your customers do not have to remember the names of all the staff at your location.

- Problem callers. If you find some network Echomail user's messages inappropriate for your own BBS, you can send that user's messages to the "Trashcan". Likewise, if you have a caller whose messages should not be exported to the network, you can discard messages from that caller. If you have a utility that posts messages on your BBS that you don't want exported, put the "From" name this utility uses into the Trashcan list.

  You can filter both incoming and outgoing messages from a user, or filter one way only.

- Frequently misspelled names. If you or one of your callers has a name that is frequently misspelled, you can translate those misspelled names on incoming messages so that the mail actually reaches its destination. For instance, Rick Heming's last name is frequently misspelled "Hemming". A translation on incoming messages from "Rick Hemming" to "Rick Heming" will help assure that Rick still gets his mail in this case.

- Messages addressed to "SYSOP". Some Sysop use their real first and last names, while others log on as Sysop. *Wildcat!* treats messages addressed to "Sysop" in a special way — messages will automatically be readdressed to the Sysop or conference Sysop. If mail addressed to the Sysop on someone else's BBS shows up as personal mail for you or one of your conference Sysop, translate the name SYSOP on incoming messages to the name of the network Sysop for whom the

messages are actually intended — most likely the Sysop of your host BBS.

When do I not need to translate names?

wcGATE automatically translates user names to and from acceptable Internet addressing format. For instance, messages from Sam Robertson on Mustang Software's MSI HQ BBS will be translated automatically to sam.robertson@mustang.com, and incoming messages to Sam's Internet address will be translated back to Sam's first and last names.

If you need to restrict certain local users from posting in specific network conferences, you can edit the caller's user record to lock a caller out of a specific conference. Review your *Wildcat!* Sysop Guide for information on editing user records.

Other options

In addition to the common features of all three mail gateways — host names, paths, and so on, each type of mail has additional options for you to configure. We will discuss each set of options in detail in the following chapters.

So much mail to manage ...

Once you begin importing mail to your BBS, you'll find that your message files will grow rapidly. Unless you have unlimited amounts of disk space, you will need to set some time aside on a regular basis to delete old messages.

wcPACK is a utility supplied with *Wildcat!* BBS, which trims and purges your message files. You can find out more about *wcPACK* in your *Wildcat!* Sysop Guide, but we'll briefly discuss some of the issues of managing a large message base here.

Packing

As new messages are added to your message data files, those files will continue to grow. Even if you set a maximum number of messages for each conference in *MAKEWILD*, the old messages will still be in your message file, and must be purged from time to time.

We recommend using *wcPACK* during a regular system event (once a week or so) to trim your message files. Since all nodes must be down for this operation, you should schedule the event for a time period during which your BBS is least likely to be busy.

Renumbering

The highest message number *Wildcat!* can assign in any conference is 65520. You will thus need to renumber your message conferences periodically as the message numbers approach this maximum.

Packing and renumbering can be combined in a single operation, but it must be done properly if you are to avoid losing outgoing mail.

Before you renumber, export any outgoing messages to ensure that *wcGATE*'s message pointer files are updated correctly, and that no new mail is left behind. Then renumber your message files before making your next mail pickup.

How many messages should I keep?

That depends on many things:

- Disk space. With the price of hard drives continuing to drop, disk space is not the issue it once was. Nevertheless, it's still a finite resource, and large amounts of mail will fill up your disk faster than you can imagine. If you run out of disk space unexpectedly, other *Wildcat!* operations will almost certainly be affected. Don't be fooled by free space reported by disk compression utilities either — since their estimates are based on average compression, the actual free space may be more, or much less by the time your files are actually saved.
- Your callers' reading habits. If most of your callers pick up their mail daily, you can delete mail much sooner than if they call less frequently.
- The amount of "traffic" in any message conference. Some very active echo conferences and newsgroups receive more than 100 messages each day. You may need to purge these conferences more often than lower-traffic conferences to avoid running out of disk space.
- The historical value of the mail. You may want to keep mail in certain conferences for extended periods of time, depending on its content and importance to you and your callers.

While it is hard to establish an absolute rule about how much mail to keep, most Sysops who carry a selection of Echomail conferences for their callers keep about two to four weeks worth of mail in each conference.

Netiquette and net culture

Most public Echomail networks and conferences have established formal or informal rules governing the behavior of users who post messages. This information is as important to your callers who post messages on Echomail networks as it is to you, the Sysop.

It is considered bad form in almost any conference to engage in any of the following activities:

- Extended discussions of matters not related to the conference topic.
- Insulting, offensive or profane language, particularly when it is directed towards a person rather than an issue.
- Advertising, unless the conference is specifically set up for buying and selling goods or services. Don't post your BBS ad unless you're in a BBS Ads conference.
- Posting chain letters, or soliciting people for moneymaking schemes, even those that claim to be "completely legal" — in most cases they are in fact completely *illegal*. Annoyed net users may report you to the authorities, and you could find yourself being investigated for mail fraud.
- Posting requests to send cards to a dying child who wants to get into the Guinness Book of Records. The child in question recovered from his illness several years ago, got into the book of records, and is now grown up. He does not want to receive any more cards, and the Guinness Book of Records has now closed that category forever.
- Except in conferences specifically for this purpose, any messages containing ANSI art, or BBS-specific system and color macros. Some networks also prohibit high ASCII characters. ANSI and high ASCII characters are not necessarily compatible with non-PC compatible systems on the network, and BBS specific macros are meaningless outside their host systems.

- Excessive quoting when replying to messages. Delete all quoted text from your reply that does not pertain directly to your response — including message headers, origin and signature lines.
- TYPING IN ALL CAPS. Capital letters are used to suggest loud emphasis in electronic communication, and unwarranted use of caps will surely result in admonitions from other network users to stop "shouting".
- Posting the same message in multiple conferences or newsgroups, particularly where the message has nothing to do with the conference topic. This practice is known as "carpet bombing" or "spamming", and rarely produces the results you may have hoped for.
- Playing the role of "moderator" or "topic cop" when it's not your job. If the content of a message annoys you, use the [ENTER] key to pass it by. Calling attention to someone else's bad behavior just adds to the problem in the long run.

Before posting for the first time in any Echomail conference, it's a good idea to "lurk" for awhile — reading messages in a conference without announcing your presence there, so that you can get an idea of the culture and personalities involved in any particular echo.

Your responsibilities as a Sysop

Your main responsibility is to keep the mail moving smoothly and without problems. That means reading and answering your personal mail, correcting any configuration errors that could result in mail from your system being directed into the wrong conference or network and thus wasting other people's money, and fixing system problems to prevent exporting of recycled or duplicated messages.

You are to some degree also responsible for the way your callers conduct themselves on the networks. You can prevent most problems by educating your callers about what is expected of them on the nets. On public systems, it may be wise for you to restrict "Write" access to Echomail conferences for new callers until you have verified their identity and good intentions.

Your callers' responsibilities

Callers are expected to know and abide by the conference and network regulations. Simple inexperience is the most frequent cause of problems and misunderstandings, so the more you can do to inform and educate your callers, the happier their forays into the networks will be.

Most networks will enforce the overall ground rules concerning advertising, topicality, quoting, and argumentative or offensive language. Your callers should also be cautioned against posting copyrighted information or any other legal or illegal material that could let them, and you, run afoul of the authorities.

Most mail networks make bulletins or FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) files available for your callers. Consider making these files part of your regular system bulletins, or better yet, part of your new user information package.

4 - QWK mail

To live for a time close to great minds is the best kind of education.

John Buchan (Baron Tweedsmuir)

In this chapter

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What is QWK mail?

QWK mail is based on a message exchange format originally developed by Mark "Sparky" Herring. It is now supported by most kinds of BBS software including *Wildcat!*, through the same off-line mail program callers use to download messages.

wcGATE imports "network status" mail packets downloaded from a QWK-compatible mail door, including *wcMAIL* for *Wildcat!* 4, *Tomcat* for earlier versions of *Wildcat!*, QMail, Rosemail and CamMail for PCBoard, Mainmail for GAP, and many others.

What is "network status"?

Network status consists of two security features. The first allows network sysops to upload reply packets from their callers through the host's mail door without changing the "from" name in the message header. The second prevents ordinary non-network status mail packets from being imported without permission into someone else's BBS.

There are some other differences between normal and network status mail packets. A network status mail packet has additional binary information to distinguish it from a normal mail packet. And when you upload net status replies, each reply is "stamped" with your network address or user ID to prevent nodes from downloading their own messages again and setting up a duplication loop. Some systems can also make use of these network addresses to route private mail, or to trace the path of a message back to its origin.

Network status is a security attribute that must be assigned to you by your host, either on a conference by conference basis, or globally by security profile. Without it, *wcGATE* will not import packets from your host. Some hosts will establish a separate user account for your network mail runs, so you should take care to avoid mixing net status and non-net status packets from the same host.

Adding a host

Your first step is to set up your user account at your host's BBS to send and receive network mail. That generally means you will need to log on to the host with your network mail user account, and visit the mail door to select conferences and set high message pointers —you probably don't want to download every message in every conference the first time you call.

To make scripting easier and more reliable, you should configure your net Sysop user account at the host for the following options:

Toggle	Recommended Setting
Color	Off
Language	Default
Quick logon	On
Expert menus	On
Hotkeys	Optional
Protocol	Zmodem

The number of different mail doors available makes it impossible to describe in detail how to set up each one, however most are fairly easy to set up. Besides conference selection, you should also select your preferred transfer protocol (Zmodem is almost always the best choice), and file compression utility (speed is slightly more important than the degree of compression if you're waiting on-line for a mail packet).

Some mail doors also have an option to turn off "NDX" or index files. *wcGATE* does not use the index files in a mail packet, so we recommend turning index files off if you can — the result is faster creation of a mail packet, and a smaller packet size. Some mail doors turn off index files automatically for net status packets, so don't be too concerned if this option is not available.

Another option you may see is "send small CONTROL.DAT" or "selected conferences only". This option limits the size of the conference configuration file in the packet to only those conferences you have selected, rather than the entire conference selection on the BBS. Once again, packets are assembled faster, and the packet size is smaller.

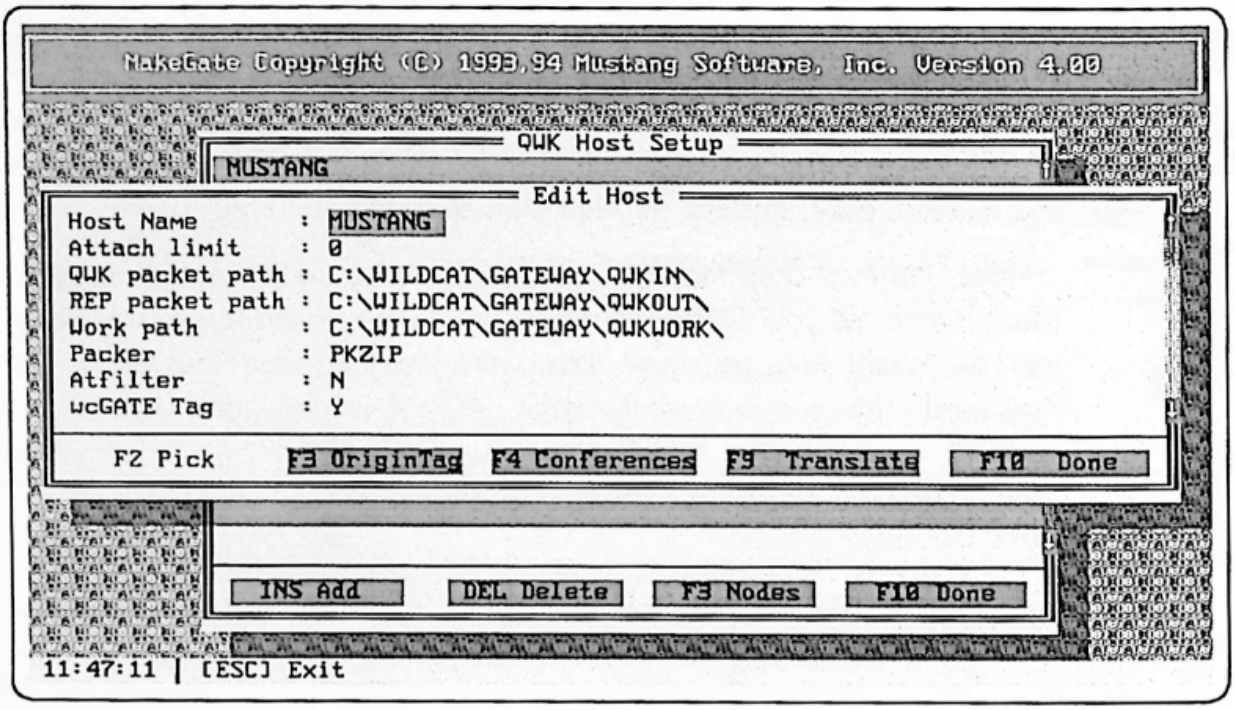
Finally, the mail door may give you the option to disconnect immediately after it receives your uploaded reply packet. If you send large reply packets, this could save you some time waiting on-line while your replies are imported. This is a particularly useful option if you call long distance for mail. If you do select "logoff after upload" as an option, remember to download your mail before uploading your replies.

When you have the mail door set up to your satisfaction, download a mail packet. *MAKEGATE* uses information in this packet to help you link your *Wildcat!* message conferences with your host's conferences.

The next step is to change to your WILDCAT home directory, and run *MAKEGATE*. From the main menu, select QWK/REP Network.

Local options

Local options are ones that define your system's paths, names and locations of utilities, and system settings.



The QWK Hub Setup screen will be blank at first. To add a new entry, press [INS]. The Edit Host screen is similar to data entry screens you've seen in other *Wildcat!* utility programs.

Host name

This is the name of your host's QWK packets, for instance MUSTANG or EXECNET.

File attachments

Field: Attach limit

Default: 0

wcGATE supports *Wildcat!* message attachments for QWK mail transfers. Note that this feature may not be available on all networks, and may not be consistently implemented on other types of BBS software and mail doors.

Attachments are imported automatically, if your *MAKEWILD* conference definition allows message attachments, otherwise they are discarded. The Attach Limit setting here is for outgoing messages only.

To limit the size of attachments your callers can send, set the value in the Attach Limit field to the maximum file size in bytes.

Paths for incoming and outgoing mail packets

Field: QWK packet path

Default: C:\WILDCAT\GATEWAY\QWKIN

Field: REP packet path

Default: C:\WILDCAT\GATEWAY\QWKOUT

These are the directories *wcGATE* will use for incoming and outgoing mail packets. We recommend not changing these paths from the defaults.

The default upload and download paths in your communication program should match the QWK and REP packet paths or, if that isn't practical, your batch file or script should copy the mail packets to the correct locations before processing.

Work Directory

Field: Work path

Default: C:\WILDCAT\GATEWAY\QWKWORK

This is the directory *wcGATE* uses for temporary files while it is importing and exporting messages. We recommend not changing this path from the default setting. Do *not* keep other files in your *wcGATE* work directory — they will be deleted whenever *wcGATE* processes mail.

Be sure to allow sufficient disk space to process mail — *wcGATE* will use at least three to four times the size of the mail packet as it unpacks and inserts messages.

Packer configuration

Field: Packer

Default: PKZIP

This selection should match the packer type you selected in your host's mail door. In most cases this will be PKZIP. The selections in this popup correspond with the packers you have defined in *MAKEWILD* for your own mail door settings, so any message packer you select from your host, will need to be configured for your own mail door as well.

Refer to Chapter 3 of your *Wildcat!* Sysop Guide for additional information on mail door packer configuration.

Atfilter

Default: No

ANSI escape sequences, BBS-specific system macros and color codes can all cause problems on some systems, and most public Echomail networks restrict their use. The **Atfilter** setting controls how *wcGATE* treats ANSI and system macros on messages that are imported and exported.

If Atfilter is set to Yes, *wcGATE* performs the following conversions:

- The ANSI escape character (027 decimal) is converted to a left quote (`) character.
- *Wildcat!* @###@ and PCBoard @X## color macros are converted to their ANSI equivalents where possible, with the escape character translated to a left quote (`) character.
- System macros such as @USER@ are converted to lower case: @user@.

wcGATE Tag

Default: Yes

wcGATE normally precedes the tagline information you enter with the text

```
wcGATE 4.0 ≈
```

If you want to suppress the program name and version information, set this option to No.

Append mode

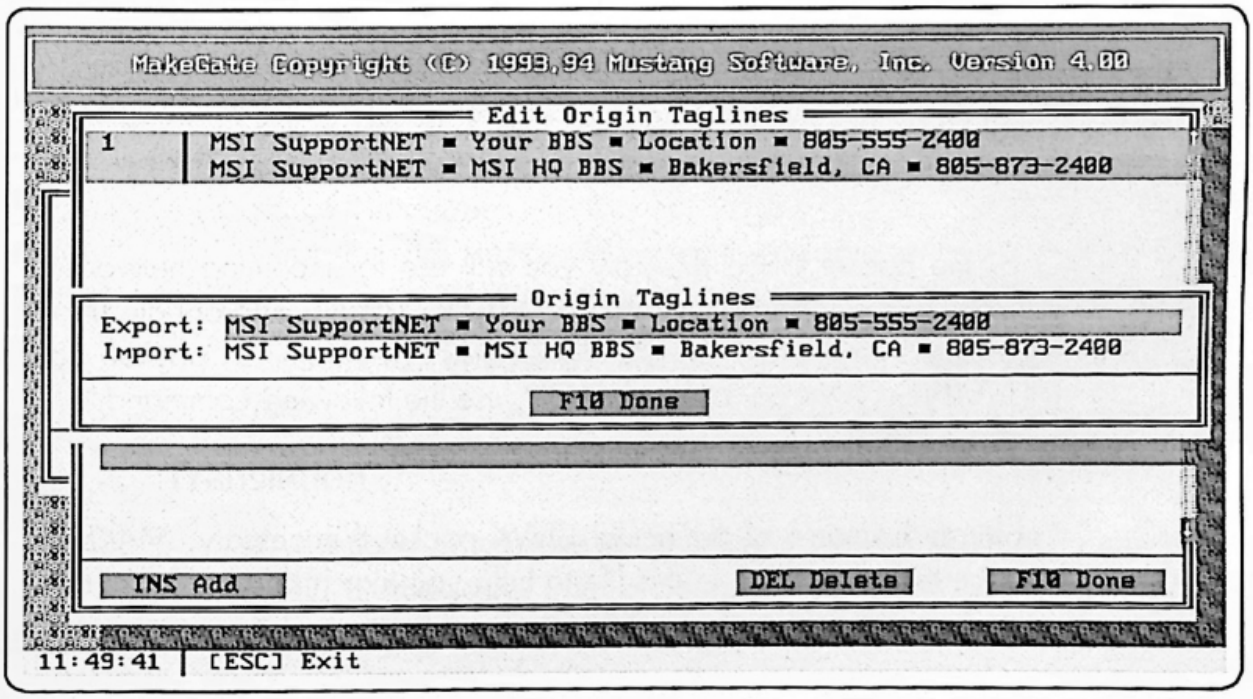
Default: No

wcGATE normally overwrites existing REP packets when you export new replies. Change this option to No if you want to append new replies onto an existing REP packet.

If you turn Append mode on, don't forget to delete successfully-uploaded reply packets to avoid duplication of messages.

Host options

Origin tags



Most public Echomail networks require an origin tag at the end of each message to identify the name and location of the BBS where the message

originated. You can define more than one set of origin tags for each hub — useful for hubs that offer several distinct networks each requiring their own origin tags.

Why do I have to define import tags as well as export tags?

Every BBS on the network appends origin tags when it exports messages. The only network node that can't is the hub — since all the mail is imported and exported through the hub's QWK mail door. That means you have to append an origin tag to messages that *originated* at the hub. This origin tag should have the hub's BBS name and location, rather than yours.

Defining Conferences

If you haven't already defined your network conferences in *MAKEWILD*, do so now. Press [F10] to save your QWK host settings, then press [ESC] to exit *MAKEGATE*.

A printout of a capture file or network information file from your host will help you assign conference names correctly. Refer back to Chapter 3 for the proper conference toggles and other settings for Echomail conferences.

Copy the packet to the directory you will use for incoming network mail packets, and extract the CONTROL.DAT file with the appropriate unpacking utility. To extract a CONTROL.DAT file from a packet called MUSTANG.QWK packed with PKZIP, use the following command:

```
PKUNZIP MUSTANG.QWK CONTROL.DAT
```

Substitute the name of the actual QWK packet if necessary. *MAKEGATE* will use the information in this file to help you match up your local conferences with the conferences at your host.

Start *MAKEGATE* again, and go back to QWK Host Setup. Press [ENTER] to edit the host you created, then press [F4] to edit your conferences.

Just like the hub list, the conference list will be empty to begin with. Press [INS] to add the first conference to the list. Select your *Wildcat!* destination

conference first: press F2 to pop up a list of *Wildcat!* conferences. Make your selection, then press F10. Next, select the remote conference. Press F2 again to see a list of conferences at your host, from the CONTROL.DAT file in your mail packet.

Note that *MAKEGATE* will warn you if you try to assign the same *Wildcat!* conference to more than one remote conference. This helps prevent accidental duplication, cross-echos and misposted messages.

Next, select the origin tag you want to use for this conference. One again, press F2 to pop up a selection list.

The final selection on this screen is to allow private mail. If you change this option to Yes, private messages as well as public messages will be exported from this conference.

Private mail is supported to varying degrees by other Echomail network software, and may be allowed or disallowed by network regulations as well. Do not rely on private Echomail to transmit sensitive or confidential information, or for messages that must reach their destination.

If you choose not to allow private mail to export from a conference, you can still override this setting for specified users on your BBS by using a name translation option to export private messages. Review the "Translations" section below for examples.

Press F10 to save your changes and return to the Edit Conferences screen. Add the rest of your conferences, then press F10 to return to the host setup menu.

Translation

If you need to translate or filter any incoming or outgoing user names, or reject all messages from a particular user name, press F9 to pop up the Translation screen. Each host has its own set of translation tables, and translations apply to every conference for this host.

The procedure for adding names to the translation table follows the same conventions as many other *Wildcat!* operations. Press INS to add an entry to the list, or highlight and press ENTER to edit an existing entry.

Wildcat! Name and External Name are the names *wcGATE* should act on for translation. One or the other may be left blank, depending on the type of translation. Wildcat! Name is the name that should appear on messages imported to your BBS, while External Name is the name that should appear on messages exported from your BBS.

Translate Import

If the Sysop of your host BBS uses "Sysop" as his logon name, rather than using his real name, enter the host Sysop's real name under Wildcat! Name, and enter "Sysop" under External Name. Select Translate Import as the translation action.

Any messages to and from "Sysop" that arrive in your mail packets will then be translated automatically to your host Sysop's real name.

Translate Export

If, on the other hand, you use the name "Sysop" instead of your real name, you will need to translate outgoing messages to your real name to avoid the same situation happening at your hub. In this case, enter "Sysop" under Wildcat! Name, and your real name under External Name. Select Translate Export as the translation action.

Translate Both

If you have a caller on your BBS with the same name as another user on the echo, enter "Bob Jones" in the Wildcat! Name field, "Bob J. from Bakersfield" in the External Name field, and select Translate Both as the Action.

This name translation will be transparent to the caller. The "from" name on any messages he posts will be translated to "Bob J. from Bakersfield", and any replies will be translated back to "Bob Jones" when they arrive at your BBS.

Trashcan Incoming

If you never want to see incoming messages from a network user, enter the user's name under External Name. You can leave the Wildcat!

Name blank if you wish. Select Trashcan Incoming as the translation action.

Trashcan Outgoing

If a local caller's messages should never be exported to the network ,enter the caller's name under Wildcat! Name. You can leave the External Name blank if you wish. Select Trashcan Outgoing as the translation action.

Allow Private

This setting allows the user named here to override the "allow private mail" setting for conferences associated with this hub.

Picking up the mail

Now that you have all your conferences configured and any necessary name translations entered, you're ready to begin picking up mail. This is a three-step procedure. First, run *wcGATE* to export your outgoing mail and create a REP packet for your host.

Second, start your communication program and call your host, log on using your net Sysop user account, and open the host's mail door. Download a new QWK mail packet, upload your REP packet, and disconnect.

Finally, exit from your communication program and run *wcGATE* to import your new QWK mail packet, then restart *Wildcat!*.

Exporting mail

wcGATE is a command line utility to import and export mail. On the command line, you specify whether to import or export mail, the type of mail packet to read or create (in this case QWK), and the name of the host packet to read or create.

A proper command line to export mail to a host named MUSTANG looks like this:

```
WCGATE EXPORT QWK HOST:MUSTANG
```

wcGATE will scan your message conferences, and copy any new messages into a REP packet. It exits to DOS automatically when the operation is complete.

One additional option is available when you export mail:

Verbose

If you want *wcGATE* to log its activity in detail, including the message header and conference information for each message it imports or exports, add the word VERBOSE (or its abbreviation "V") to the end of the command line, like this:

```
WCGATE E Q H:MUSTANG V
```

Notice that you can abbreviate the words "Export", "QWK", "Host" and "Verbose" to the single letters "E", "Q", "H" and "V".

Without the "Verbose" switch, *wcGATE* will log only the total number of messages imported or exported in each conference.

Connecting with your host

wcGATE imports and exports mail only — it does not place the outgoing phone call for you. To connect with your host and exchange QWK mail, you need a communication software program to dial your modem and transfer the files.

Although any quality communication software program will work, we recommend QmodemPro — a good selection of scripts are available from MSI HQ to help you automate your mail runs on a variety of different kinds of BBSs.

Configuring your communication software to pick up mail

If mail pickup is going to be a regular event for your BBS, it makes sense to automate the procedure as far as possible. If you haven't already called your host and set up your network Sysop user account by selecting conferences, transfer protocols and other mail door options, do so now. Refer to the section "Adding a Host", near the beginning of this chapter, for general instructions.

To make scripting easier, we recommend you configure at least the following general options in your communication software.

Dialing directory

Create a dialing directory entry for your host, which includes the name of the BBS and the phone number you use for mail connections, along with any alternate numbers that may be applicable

Terminal emulation

ANSI emulation is the proper choice for BBS connections. If your communication program does not offer ANSI or IBM PC, select VT100.

Upload and Download Paths

The upload and download paths should match the QWKIN and QWKOUT paths from *MAKEGATE*. If you choose not to set these as your default upload or download path, you have two options:

- Make provision in your script to redirect QWK mail uploads and downloads to the proper location, overriding your communication program's defaults, or
- Use a batch file command to copy the QWK and REP packets to the proper locations after exporting and before importing.

Transfer protocols

Zmodem is the most efficient transfer protocol in most cases. If your communication program offers Zmodem either as an internal protocol or externally via DSZ, use it.

Ymodem/G may appear to be faster, but you risk aborting the entire transfer if an error occurs. If you have problems with line noise or flow control, Ymodem/G will be unreliable, and the 3 to 5 percent gain in raw CPS over Zmodem will be lost the first time a large transfer is aborted.

Logon name and password

If your communication program allows you to enter your logon name and password as part of the dialing directory entry or in a macro, do so. You can recall this information easily with a script variable, without having to hard code your logon information in the script.

Creating a script

If you want to automate your mail runs, your communication program must be able to start up from the command line and immediately execute a script. For QmodemPro for DOS, the command line is

```
QMPRO /S=[script file name]
```

You can modify one of the pre-configured QmodemPro scripts available from MSI HQ BBS, or you can write your own. Here is what the script must do, step by step:

1. Dial the host BBS
2. Select logon options such as color and language, if required.
3. Enter your user name
4. Enter your password
5. Get to the menu where the mail door is installed
6. Open the mail door
7. Delete or rename any existing QWK packets for this host already in your download directory
8. Request a download
9. Accept the packet and begin the transfer
10. If a .REP packet exists, request an upload
11. Send the reply packet
12. If the upload was successful, delete or rename the reply file
13. Logoff and disconnect
14. Exit the com program

Tips

- You may want to set a timer for each operation, so that if the host BBS becomes hung you are not left on-line for an extended period of time.
- Some system prompts are variable — they may occur in any sequence (for example a "Continue, Yes/No" prompt, or they may change (for instance "Good morning" or "Good afternoon"). For QmodemPro scripts, use "WHEN" script commands rather than "WAITFOR" commands for prompts that may change, or may appear in different sequences or not at all.

- If you QuickLearn a script, be sure to edit it after saving, to leave only enough to uniquely identify a prompt. For instance, a prompt that is recorded as

```
WAITFOR "118 minutes left. Command?"
```

is going to cause problems the next time you call, because the time remaining is almost certainly going to be different. Edit the WAITFOR command to look for this instead:

```
WAITFOR "left. Command?"
```

- Your script should have a command at the end to terminate the script and exit the com program. In QmodemPro for DOS, the command is

```
SYSTEM Y
```

How often should I call my host?

That depends. The less often you call, the more time it will take for messages, and their replies, to reach their destination. If you participate in a public Echomail network, you will probably need to call your host about once a day, and you may be assigned a scheduled time for your mail call.

Each level in an Echomail network can add up to two days delay between the time a message is posted and the time it reaches the host at the top level of the network. If you have nodes picking up mail from you that you forward to a host, it's better to call your host twice a day to keep the mail moving smoothly.

Your callers need to understand the time delay between posting a message and receiving a response. Even if the nodes and hosts exchange mail regularly and on schedule, other callers may not pick up their mail daily, or even regularly, and if they do their mail reading off-line, it may be a few more days before they get around to uploading their replies.

Picking up QWK mail via satellite

To receive mail by satellite, you will need to purchase or lease a satellite receiver and a downlink capable of receiving data, from the satellite operator. You will also have to pay a monthly subscription fee to the satellite operator for this service. Different networks are carried on different satellites — contact your network hosts for more information.

The mail is supplied as ordinary net status QWK packets, which you import to your BBS in the usual way. You cannot send replies via satellite — you'll still need to make a call to your host to do that. Network conferences with restricted access may also require a phone call to your host for security reasons.

Some networks use "dongles" or software encryption to protect their conferences from unauthorized access — you will need to obtain any hardware or software keys from your network host if this is the case.

Depending on the number of networks and conferences you want to receive, and the location of your host, this may be less expensive in the long run than picking up mail over the phone. Satellite services also offer USENET newsgroups which you can import with the UUCP mail functions of *wcGATE*.

Importing mail

A proper command line to import mail to your BBS from a host named MUSTANG looks like this:

```
WCGATE IMPORT QWK HOST:MUSTANG
```

You can use single-letter abbreviations for the command line options. The following command line is also valid:

```
WCGATE I Q H:MUSTANG
```

wcGATE will unpack the QWK packet into the work directory, and imports messages into each conference. When it has finished importing, it exits to DOS without further action on your part.

wcGATE offers two additional options for importing a QWK mail packet.

Flag

By default, *wcGATE* will notify users of incoming mail addressed to them. Since *wcGATE* needs to open the user database and check each user record as it imports mail, this can slow down importing, particularly if few of the messages are likely to be addressed to callers on your BBS.

Callers will still receive messages addressed to them if *wcGATE* does not update their user information, but they will not be notified of new mail when they logon to *Wildcat!*.

A sample command line that imports mail from MUSTANG.QWK but does not notify local users of new mail would look like this:

```
WCGATE IMPORT QWK HOST:MUSTANG FLAG
```

The abbreviated version looks like this:

```
WCGATE I Q H:MUSTANG F
```

Checking

Configuration errors on other systems can sometimes cause mail to be recycled, and can result in duplicates of existing messages in your network mail packets. *wcGATE* and *wcMAIL* create and maintain a set of duplicate message checking files with the extension .CRC, one for each conference, in the path for message files. If a new message is an exact duplicate (including to/from names, message text and origin lines), *wcGATE* will reject the new message.

If you are not concerned about importing duplicate messages, you can speed up mail imports by turning off duplicate checking. Here's an example:

```
WCGATE IMPORT QWK HOST:MUSTANG CHECKING
```

and the abbreviated version:

```
WCGATE I Q H:MUSTANG C
```

Note that you can use these options, Verbose, Flag and Checking, in any combination, in any order

Resetting high message numbers

wcGATE has an additional switch to reset high message numbers to the highest message number in each conference associated with a hub. The proper command line is

```
WCGATE R Q H:MUSTANG
```

Managing the *wcMAIL* network user database

The following information is only pertinent if you are running a QWK network hub using *wcMAIL*, with other nodes calling you for mail.

Under ordinary circumstances, *wcMAIL* will only send private mail addressed to user names matching the user name of the caller downloading the mail, unless that caller has Sysop access. This makes network transfers of private messages awkward, as it would be necessary for a network mail caller to have access to ALL the private mail on your system in order to transfer private mail to his own users.

wcMAIL solves that problem by keeping a database of user names. If a caller on another BBS enters a message, and that message is uploaded to *wcMAIL* by a net status caller, *wcMAIL* records the caller's name and the user name of the originating node.

For instance, if a caller named STEVE CRIPPEN posts a message which is then uploaded to MSI HQ BBS in a REP packet by a net status caller named KAOS BBS, Steve's name and the name of the net status caller would automatically be recorded in the network user database, along with the node his message originated from. If a caller leaves a private message for Steve Crippen on the MSI HQ BBS, *wcMAIL* will add that message to the next net status QWK packet downloaded by KAOS BBS.

MAKEGATE gives sysops the ability to view and edit names in the network user database, if desired. This may be useful if you need to enter names into the database before the connecting node has made a transfer, or if you need to delete names or nodes from the database.

You can edit the network user database from the QWK/REP Network screen. Press F3 to pop up the editing screen. Use your PG UP and PG DN keys to scroll through the list. The node names are listed first, followed by user names. You can add and delete names, and generate a report.

The report provides information on hubs and user names, duplicate names and user list by node. This information may be useful to help you track down a source of duplicate messages.

5 - MHS mail

Be virtuous and you will be eccentric.

Mark Twain

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What is MHS mail?

MHS mail uses Novell NetWare's MHS (Message Handling Service) to exchange messages between a variety of applications, including *Wildcat!*. With MHS mail, you can send private e-mail messages between *Wildcat!* and any other MHS-compatible E-mail application, or you can echo one or more conferences with another *Wildcat!* BBS using MHS to distribute the mail.

For example, a caller can leave a message in *Wildcat!* to a user at another location who doesn't even have a *Wildcat!* system installed, but does have MHS connected to cc:Mail. The Email message will show up in the user's cc:Mail mailbox.

On the other hand, a caller can receive messages in *Wildcat!* that originated in another application, and the caller's reply will be routed back to the original sender automatically. For instance, a message written in Da Vinci eMAIL to a caller on your *Wildcat!* BBS will be routed through MHS and will appear in *Wildcat!* as personal e-mail addressed to your caller.

Finally, you can share, or "echo" one or more of your *Wildcat!* message conferences with another *Wildcat!* BBS, using MHS as the means to transport the messages. *wcGATE* will gather all the new messages in each conference you specify, and prepare a mail packet that MHS will then forward to its destination. Several *Wildcat!* systems can participate in an echo of this type.

Configuring NetWare MHS

wcGATE requires Novell NetWare MHS version 1.5 or greater. Your NetWare reseller can recommend and obtain the correct edition of MHS for you. NetWare Global Messaging (NGM) 2.0 is also supported, but owing to the complexity of its installation and configuration it is best left to NetWare experts.

Your first step is to install and configure NetWare MHS according to the instructions in your MHS documentation, or ask the LAN administrator to do it for you. Some of the MHS configuration options may require supervisor access on the LAN.

Application registration

MHS applications are programs that use NetWare MHS to deliver and receive messages. There are two general classes of applications, managed applications and unmanaged applications. *Wildcat!* is a managed application, and as such must be installed using the MHSUSER program included with NetWare MHS. This installation allows *Wildcat!* and *wcGATE* to use the Directory Manager to manage users.

The MHSUSER program provides general access to most of the MHS user management services that you can use throughout the Directory Manager, including registering an application. This program uses command line options that are fully explained in the MHS documentation. All MHSUSER functions are designated by X-function number. The function number to register an application is -X10, and is followed on the command line by other parameters.

The command line to register an application is:

```
MHSUSER -X10 -Aappname -Edescription -Sadmin_password
```

To perform the registration, change to the MHS directory where the .EXE files are located (usually \MHS\EXE\) and type the following command line:

```
MHSUSER -X10 -AWILDCAT -EBBS -SPASSWORD
```

Replace the "PASSWORD" with the MHS administrator's password. If no password is assigned to the administrator, enter a space after the "-S", This command line must be entered without spaces, except between the commands.

This will register *Wildcat!* as an application within MHS. If MHSUSER reports an error, refer to your Novell NetWare MHS Installation and Operation guide for help.

Directory Manager

The Directory Manager is the main administrative tool for configuring and managing your MHS system.

MHS Host setup

Your next step is to set yourself up as an MHS Host. To do this, change to the subdirectory where your MHS executable files are located, normally [drive]\MHS\EXE, and type

```
MHS ENTER
```

Substitute the drive letter for the local or network drive where MHS is installed.

Enter your admin name and password, if prompted. From the main menu, select "Manage Directories", then from the Setup menu, select "This host". Depending on your particular MHS installation, your screen may look slightly different from the one shown here:

```
                    H O S T   S E T U P

     Host and workgroup name: MUSTANG
                 Description: Mustang Software, Inc.
     Administrative username: Admin     ...

                Preferred hub: NHUB     ...
 Password for access to hubs:
           Communication port: COM1
                   Modem type: 2400B    ...
     Default speed for modem: 2400
              Dialing prefix:


 Is this host part of a multihost workgroup (Y/N)? No
    Does this host provide routing services (Y/N)? Yes
                                                    <Done>

 Index: Press <?>                        Help: Press <F1>
```

The host name and description should reflect the name of your corporation or BBS. The administrative username should be the name of the person responsible for setting up and maintaining the MHS software — this will probably be you, unless your LAN administrator performs these duties.

The most common configuration for Email and Echomail is a Single-host Workgroup that Calls a Hub. To set up this type of host, specify that the host is *not* part of a multihost workgroup, and that it *does* provide routing services:

```
Is this host part of a multihost workgroup (Y/N)? No
   Does this host provide routing services (Y/N)? Yes
```

Fill in the remaining options according to the instructions in your NetWare MHS manual. Your preferred hub can be set to any host, and NHUB is the recommended default. Do not place the name of your Echomail hosts in this section.

MHS Username registration

```
                    NAMES OF USERS AT THIS HOST

1 Admin     Admin for host "-NNLPMJ-" MHS

                          USER AT THIS HOST

                          Username:
                        Full name:
                         Password:
                Preferred application: MHS
               Also uses applications:
                                    :
                                    :
                                    :
                                                          <Done>

  Index: Press <?>                          Help: Press <F1>
```

Each type of MHS mail requires you to register certain user names with NetWare MHS, so that MHS knows where to route the messages. Without this name registration, MHS will not function.

To register a username, run MHS from the \MHS\EXE directory, log on as MHS administrator, and select Directory Manager from the menu. Under "Review, add, modify or delete", select "names of users at this host". Select "Add entry", then enter the user information according to the type of mail you want to use:

Mail Type	Username	Preferred application
MHS Email	*USERNAME* or *USERID*	Wildcat
MHS Mail	MHSMAIL	Wildcat
MHS Echo	MHSECHO	Wildcat

Usernames can be no longer than eight characters, with no spaces or punctuation characters allowed except the hyphen (-), dollar sign ($) or number sign (#).

If you allow duplicate user names in *Wildcat!*, enter the user ID number for each local user rather than the name, so *wcGATE* can direct the mail to the proper recipient.

MHS Email

With MHS Email, each user who sends and receives mail via MHS must be registered on *each* MHS host, and their MHS names must be translated in *MAKEGATE* to their *Wildcat!* user names.

The Username is the caller's MHS Email name, for instance "RICK". The Full name is the name this caller uses on the BBS, for instance "RICK HEMING". The preferred application should be set to Wildcat.

wcGATE does not automatically translate MHS names to the user's full name. For callers to receive their MHS mail in *Wildcat!*, you must also enter their names in the translation table in *MAKEGATE*. We will review the procedure for translation table entries in the next section.

MHS Mail

MHS Mail is a special type of mail that works only between *Wildcat!* systems. In this case, only the username MHSMAIL needs to be registered, and the preferred application must be set to *Wildcat!*.

Here's how to address an MHS message to Rick Heming on a *Wildcat!* BBS at an MHS site called MUSTANG:

```
MHSMAIL@MUSTANG {RICK HEMING}
```

wcGATE will automatically readdress the message to the user name inside the braces. No other username registrations or translation table entries are required for MHS Mail, but mail can only be exchanged between *Wildcat!* systems this way.

MHS Echo

MHS Echo is another special application that works only between *Wildcat!* version 4 systems. MHS Echo is not compatible with earlier versions of MHS Echomail. Only the username MHSECHO must be registered in MHS. No name translation is performed, or required, by MHS or by *wcGATE*.

Scheduling and Routing

```
                ROUTES TO WORKGROUPS, HOSTS, AND GATEWAYS

Host      Type Routing                    Last Connection Description

                                                          Software, Inc
                A HOST THAT THIS HOST PHONES              Master Hub

        Host name:
     Description:

 Telephone number:

  Modem speed to use when calling: 2400
       Number of tries to connect: 15
                 Get remote mail: Yes
                       Threshold: 1
     Connect freely from 00:00 to 23:59
     Over threshold from 00:00 to 23:59
          Force connection every: 0    min
     Require password: Yes    Password:
                                                   <Done>

 Index: Press <?>                        Help: Press <F1>
```

The scheduling of calls to other hosts is controlled by the MHS Directory Manager. You need to define routing and other information for each host with which you will be exchanging MHS mail.

To schedule a host, chose "Routes to workgroups, hosts, and gateways" from the Directory Manager menu. Select "Add Entry" from the popup list.

The correct option here is "telephone call TO that remote host", even if other hosts will be calling you.

Host Route Definition

The information on this screen is explained in detail in your NetWare MHS guide. The options necessary for *wcGATE* are described briefly below:

Get Remote Mail: Yes

The default option "Yes" allows a single call to send and receive messages.

Threshold: 1

The default of 1 indicates that a call will take place whenever 1 message is queued for delivery. This value is appropriate for all types of mail.

Connect freely from 0:00 to 23:59

This is the time period during which MHS will call this host when the number of messages specified under "Threshold" are queued for delivery. The default is 24 hours a day.

Over threshold from 0:00 to 23:59

This is the time period during which MHS will call the host when the number of queued messages exceeds the number specified under "Threshold". This setting is ignored unless the default values for "Threshold" and "Connect freely" are changed from the defaults of 1 and 24 hours.

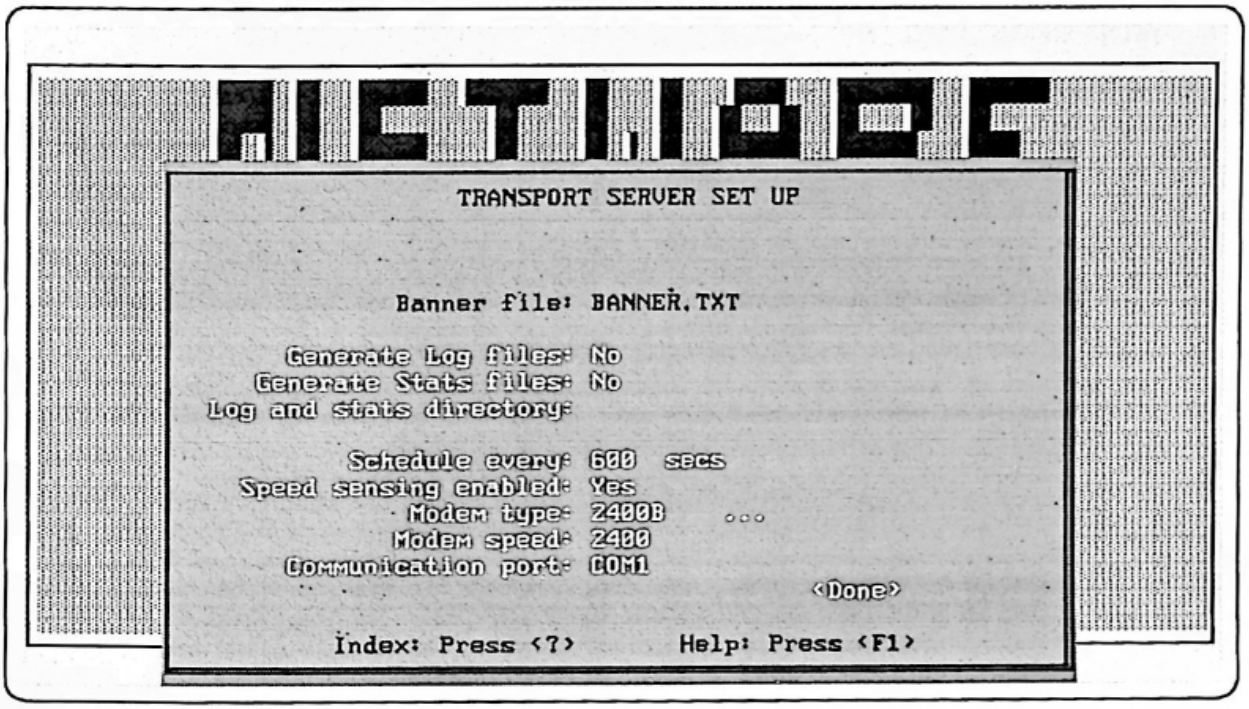
Force connections every: 0 min.

The default of 0 specifies that connections are made only when mail is queued for delivery.

Require password: Yes

We recommend requiring a password for each host, to prevent unauthorized access to your MHS mail system. Don't forget to advise the host of the password they should use for your MHS system.

Transport Server



The Transport Server is the component of MHS that actually connects with other hosts to exchange messages. Select "Set up Transport Server" from the MHS main menu.

Schedule every: 600 secs.

The default of every 600 seconds means the transport server will activate the connectivity manager every 10 minutes to see if any calls are needed. If you want MHS to export messages any time they are placed in the queue, leave this option at the default.

Refer to your NetWare MHS manual for specific configuration instructions for the other entries on this screen.

Alternative Configurations

The previous discussion assumes you will be operating at least one *Wildcat!* node 24 hours a day to handle the mail events, plus a dedicated

MHS workstation at each host that will be able to send and receive mail at any time.

Non-dedicated MHS Operation

If you don't want to run a dedicated MHS server, you can execute MHS as a regular event from one of your *Wildcat!* nodes. This is called a "non-dedicated" host, and it will be restricted to placing outgoing calls only.

To set up a non-dedicated host, run MHS and select "Directory Manager". and select "routes to workgroups, hosts and gateways". Select an entry to add or modify, and define it as "telephone call TO that remote host".

Since the non-dedicated host will be calling to pick up messages, rather than taking calls from other hosts, the configuration must be set up to force a call whenever MHS is executed. You do this by setting the "Force connection every:" prompt to 1 minute.

In addition to changing the host route definition at the non-dedicated host location, all other host locations must be told that they will not be originating calls to the non-dedicated host, but will be receiving them instead. The same host route definition screen is used at other locations to indicate the non-dedicated host is one that is reached by "telephone call FROM that remote host". The only information required for this configuration is the host name, description and password.

Non-dedicated *Wildcat!* Operation

There may be situations where your MHS server runs full-time, but *Wildcat!* does not — for instance where all *Wildcat!* users connect via LAN, making incoming phone line connections over dedicated nodes unnecessary, and there is no *Wildcat!* or other system that can run *wcGATE* as an event when needed.

You can configure the MHS transport server to run *wcGATE* at regular intervals by setting up *wcGATE* as a Gateway within MHS. You define a gateway from the "Directory Manager" "routes to workgroups, hosts and gateways" screen. Select "Define a gateway", and fill in the following information:

Host Name

This is the name of the gateway program. This is not the same as the program name to run, and we recommend using the name WILDGATE.

Description

The description can be up to 24 characters, for instance "*Wildcat!* to MHS via *wcGATE*".

Gateway version

64 is the default, which tells *wcGATE* to use the v64 Standard Message Format.

Gateway commands

These commands are passed on the command line to the gateway program as it is executed. Since we want a number of commands to be executed, we enter the command as a shell to DOS that executes a batch file called WILDGATE.BAT.

A proper command line would be

```
/C WILDGATE.BAT
```

Gateway Operation

Since we want our gateway to run every time the transport server calls the connectivity manager (every 600 seconds by default), we need to link its operation to that event. The one MHS activity that occurs every time the transport server calls the connectivity manager is called INPOST. The INPOST routine runs the program INPOST.EXE or INPOST.COM from the gateway public directory. Therefore, if we want to run a program each time the transport server calls the connectivity manager, all we need to do is place the desired program in the gateway public directory, and name it INPOST.EXE or INPOST.COM.

Here is one example of a simple WILDGATE.BAT file that exports and imports mail. You can find additional examples at the end of this chapter.

```
C:
CD \WILDCAT
WCGATE EXPORT MHS
WCGATE IMPORT MHS
```

The problem with running *wcGATE* directly from the gateway public directory is that it must be run from the *Wildcat!* home directory in order for it to find its support files. The solution is to run a batch file called by a second copy of COMMAND.COM, that changes to the proper directory, exports outgoing mail, imports incoming mail, and terminates.

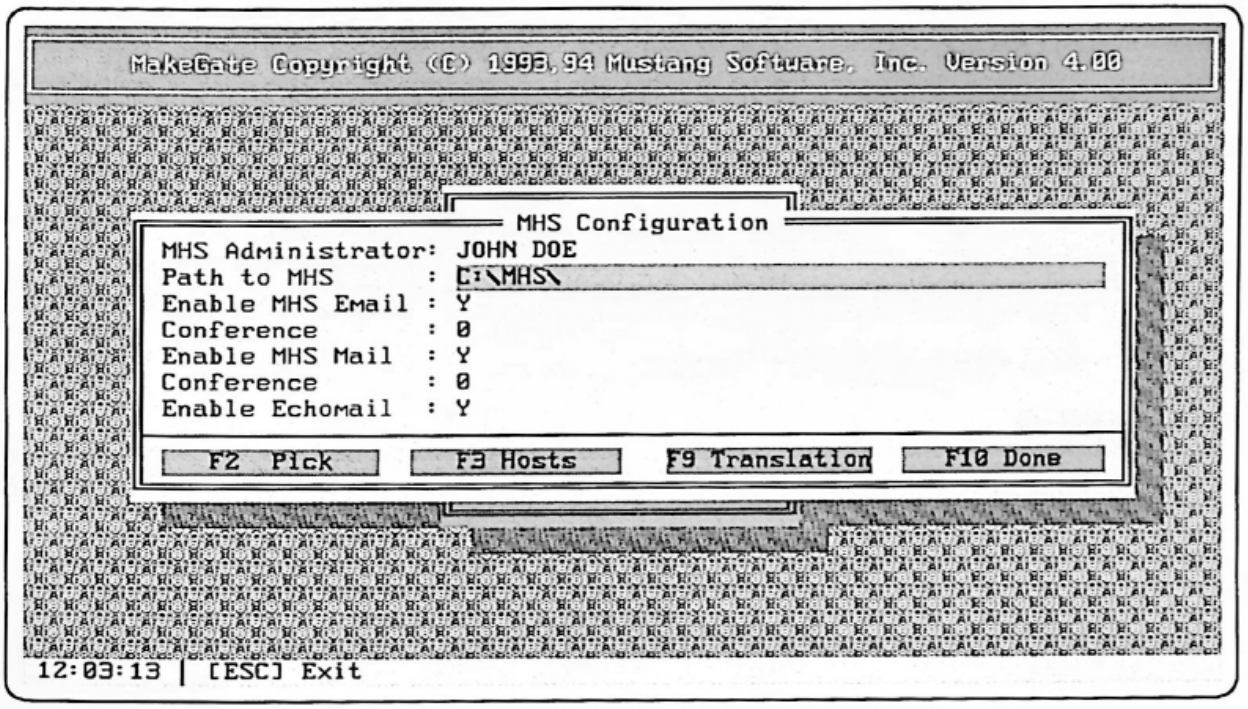
All you need now is a program called INPOST.COM to execute the batch file. To create INPOST.COM, copy the DOS command interpreter COMMAND.COM from the root directory on drive C: or a bootable DOS diskette of the correct DOS version, into the gateway public directory. If you set up the gateway according to the instructions in this example, the directory will be called

```
\MHS\MAIL\GATES\WILDGATE\PUBLIC
```

Once COMMAND.COM is in the gateway public directory, rename COMMAND.COM to INPOST.COM with the DOS command

```
REN COMMAND.COM INPOST.COM
```

Adding a host



Now that you've finished setting up NetWare MHS to send and receive mail from *Wildcat!*, you can now begin configuring *Wildcat!* and *wcGATE*. If you have not already done so, run *MAKEWILD* to create and define the conferences to use for each type of MHS mail you want to use.

MHS Mail and MHS Email each require their own conferences, and all messages in these conferences should be forced private. Only callers who should be able to send and receive mail via MHS should have access to these conferences.

You can have as many MHS Echo conferences as you want. These are set up as regular *Wildcat!* conferences, and should allow public and private messages or public messages only, according to your preference. Since *wcGATE* and MHS do not perform any user name registration or translation for MHS Echo mail, access to these conferences is at your discretion.

When your conference configuration is complete, exit *MAKEWILD* and run *MAKEGATE* in your WILDCAT home directory, then select MHS Mail/MHS Echo from the main menu.

MHS Administrator

The MHS Administrator is the user name to whom *wcGATE* and MHS should address system messages concerning delivery and user name problems. This is not necessarily the same as the admin name in MHS, but the name you enter here should be a user on your *Wildcat!* BBS who is familiar with MHS and who can take the necessary action to resolve any problems reported by the software.

Path to MHS

This is the directory where MHS is installed, most commonly

```
C:\MHS
```

or

```
F:\MHS
```

The MHS installation creates a number of subdirectories below the main MHS directory; this entry should point to the main MHS directory.

MHS Email

MHS Email is person-to-person Email routed through MHS. Answer "Yes" to the prompt "Enable MHS Mail" to turn on this feature.

Conference

Only one conference can be assigned to MHS Email. All messages in this conference will be scanned by *wcGATE* and delivered to MHS for distribution. Press F2 to pop up a selection list of your *Wildcat!* conferences.

Translation

Each caller who wants to send and receive MHS Email must be registered in MHS, and must have an entry in the *wcGATE* translation table. The

procedure for adding names to the translation table follows the same conventions as many other *Wildcat!* operations. Press INS to add an entry to the list, or highlight and press ENTER to edit an existing entry.

The proper translation type for almost all MHS Email users is "Translate Both". The Wildcat! Name is the name the caller uses on your BBS, while the External Name is the name under which the caller is registered in MHS. Keep in mind the eight-character limit for MHS user names. Some example translation table entries would be

```
Wildcat! Name: Rick Heming  External Name: RICK

Wildcat! Name: Scott Hunter External Name: SCOTT
```

and so on.

Trashcan Incoming

If you never want to see incoming messages from an MHS user, enter the user's name under **External Name**. You can leave the **Wildcat! Name** blank if you wish. Select **Trashcan Incoming** as the translation action.

Trashcan Outgoing

If a local caller's messages should never be exported to MHS, enter the caller's name under **Wildcat! Name**. You can leave the **External Name** blank if you wish. Select **Trashcan Outgoing** as the translation action.

MHS Mail

MHS Mail setup is quite similar to MHS Email, but with one important difference. Only one user name, "MHSMAIL" needs to be registered with MHS. *wcGATE* looks after translating user names on the BBS to acceptable MHS addresses.

The proper addressing format for MHS Mail is

```
MHSMAIL@HOST {User Name}
```

Because individual user names are not registered with MHS, *Wildcat!* and *wcGATE* are the only applications that can use MHS Mail in this for-

mat. Name translation for MHS Mail is automatic, and no translation table entries are required.

MHS Echo

While the terminology may vary in some places, the mechanics of MHS Echo are just like other types of Echomail. One or more message conferences are shared between a hub and one or more nodes, in a tree-structured network.

If you are the hub on an MHS Echo network, you must add each node on your network as an MHS host, so that there will be mail for them to pick up when their MHS system calls your MHS system. If you are a node on an MHS Echo network, the only MHS host you need to add here is the hub.

wcGATE extracts messages from MHS Echo conferences, and packs them into a single file which it then attaches to an MHS Email message addressed to a user named MHSECHO@*HOSTNAME*. Because the format of this attached file follows the same structure as a QWK packet reply file, all the features of QWK-based Echomail are available, including *Wildcat!*-specific options such as file attachments.

Press F3 to pop up the MHS Host setup screen. The Edit Host screen is similar to data entry screens you've seen in other *Wildcat!* utility programs. To add a new entry, press INS. To edit an entry, select it and press ENTER.

Host name

This is the name of the MHS host to which the MHSECHO message should be routed.

File attachments

Field: Attach limit

Default: 0

wcGATE supports *Wildcat!* message attachments for MHS mail transfers. To limit the size of attachments your callers can send, set the value in the Attach Limit field to the maximum file size in bytes.

Work Directory

Field: Work path

Default: C:\WILDCAT\GATEWAY\MHSWORK

This is the directory *wcGATE* uses for temporary files while it is importing and exporting messages. We recommend not changing this path from the default setting.

Packer configuration

Field: Packer

Default: PKZIP

This is the packer *wcGATE* will use to create the MHS Echo mail packet. The selections in this popup correspond with the packers you have defined in *MAKEWILD* for your own mail door settings. Refer to Chapter 3 of your *Wildcat!* Sysop Guide for additional information on mail door packer configuration.

Atfilter

Default: No

ANSI escape sequences, BBS-specific system macros and color codes can all cause problems on some systems. The Atfilter setting controls how *wcGATE* treats ANSI and system macros on messages that are imported and exported.

If Atfilter is set to Yes, *wcGATE* performs the following conversions:

- The ANSI escape character (027 decimal) is converted to a left quote (`) character.
- *Wildcat!* @###@ and PCBoard @X## color macros are converted to their ANSI equivalents, with the escape character translated to a left quote (`) character.
- System macros such as @USER@ are converted to lower case: @user@.

wcGATE Tag

Default: Yes

wcGATE normally precedes the tagline information you enter with the text

```
wcGATE 4.0 ≈
```

If you want to suppress the program name and version information, set this option to No.

Origin tags

If you wish, you can place an origin tag on messages transported by MHS Echo, that identify the name and location of the BBS where the message originated. You can define more than one set of origin tags for each host.

Defining Conferences for Echomail

If you haven't already defined your network conferences in *MAKEWILD*, do so now. Press [F9] to save your MHS host settings, then press [ESC] to exit *MAKEGATE*. Run *MAKEWILD* to edit your message conferences. A printout of a capture file from the host will help you assign conference names correctly. Refer to Chapter 3 for the proper conference toggles and other settings for Echomail conferences.

When you are finished with *MAKEWILD*, start *MAKEGATE* again and go back to MHS Host Setup. Press [F3] to pop up a list of hosts, then press [ENTER] to edit the host you created, then press [F4] to edit your conferences.

Press INS to add the first conference to the list. Select your *Wildcat!* destination conference first: press F2 to pop up a list of *Wildcat!* conferences. Make your selection, then press F10. Next, enter the number assigned to this conference at the host. Note that *MAKEGATE* will warn you if you try to assign the same *Wildcat!* conference to more than one remote conference.

Next, select the origin tag you want to use for this conference. One again, press F2 to pop up a selection list.

The final selection on this screen is to allow private mail. If you change this option to Yes, private messages as well as public messages will be exported from this conference.

Press F10 to save your changes and return to the Edit Conferences screen. Add the rest of your conferences, then press F10 to return to the host setup menu.

Translation

MHS Echo mail requires no translation for your users to send and receive mail. Translation tables are still provided for cases where you may want to translate or filter incoming or outgoing user names.

Refer to the previous chapter, "QWK host setup" for a complete explanation of translation tables for Echomail.

Picking up the mail

Now that you have all your conferences configured and any necessary name translations entered, you're ready to begin picking up mail. This is a three-step procedure. First, run *wcGATE* to export your outgoing mail and queue up the messages for distribution by MHS.

The next step depends on whether your MHS mail host is a dedicated or non-dedicated system. A dedicated MHS host will immediately forward the queued-up messages to their destination, and you can proceed immediately to importing any messages MHS has queued up for you.

If on the other hand you run a non-dedicated MHS system, you will need to change to the MHS directory and start MHS, forcing it to call the hosts to which your outgoing messages should be routed. A proper command line would be

```
MHS -1
```

MHS picks up messages waiting at any of those hosts at the same time, then queues them up for *wcGATE* to import into *Wildcat!*, then terminates.

Exporting mail

wcGATE is a command line utility to import and export mail. On the command line, you specify whether to import or export mail, the type of mail packet to read or create (in this case MHS), and the name of the host packet to read or create.

A proper command line to export MHS Email or MHS Mail looks like this:

```
WCGATE EXPORT MHS
```

wcGATE will scan your message conferences, and queues up the messages for distribution by MHS. *wcGATE* exits to DOS automatically when the operation is complete.

The command line to export MHS Echomail is slightly different, since it must be routed to a specific host. Here is an example, using a host called MUSTANG:

```
WCGATE EXPORT MHS HOST:MUSTANG
```

Remember, only MHS Echomail requires a host name.

One additional option is available when you export mail:

Verbose

If you want *wcGATE* to log its activity in detail, including the message header and conference information for each message it imports or exports, add the word VERBOSE to the end of the command line, like this:

```
WCGATE E Q H:MUSTANG V
```

Notice that you can abbreviate the words "Export", "MHS", "Host" and "Verbose" to the single letters "E", "M", "H" and "V".

Without the "Verbose" switch, *wcGATE* will log only the total number of messages imported or exported in each conference.

Importing mail

A proper command line to import MHS Email or MHS Mail looks like this:

```
WCGATE IMPORT MHS
```

wcGATE will collect any incoming messages queued up by MHS, then imports them to your *Wildcat!* message conferences.

To import MHS Echomail to your BBS from a host named MUSTANG use a command line like this:

```
WCGATE IMPORT MHS
```

You can use single-letter abbreviations for the command line options. The following command line is also valid:

```
WCGATE I M
```

wcGATE offers two additional options for importing an MHS mail packet.

Flag

By default, *wcGATE* will notify users of incoming mail addressed to them. Since *wcGATE* needs to open the user database and check each user record as it imports mail, this can slow down importing, particularly if few of the messages are likely to be addressed to callers on your BBS.

Callers will still receive messages addressed to them if *wcGATE* does not update their user information, but they will not be notified of new mail when they logon to *Wildcat!*.

A sample command line that imports MHS Echomail from a host named MUSTANG, but does not notify local users of new mail, would look like this:

```
WCGATE IMPORT MHS FLAG
```

The abbreviated version looks like this:

```
WCGATE I M F
```

Checking

Configuration errors on other systems can sometimes cause mail to be recycled, and can result in duplicates of existing messages in your network mail packets. *wcGATE* and *wcMAIL* create and maintain a set of duplicate message checking files with the extension .CRC, one for each conference, in the path for message files. If a new message is an exact duplicate (including to/from names, message text and origin lines), *wcGATE* will reject the new message.

If you are not concerned about importing duplicate messages, you can speed up mail imports by turning off duplicate checking. Here's an example:

```
WCGATE IMPORT MHS HOST:MUSTANG CHECKING
```

and the abbreviated version:

```
WCGATE I M H:MUSTANG C
```

Note that you can use these options, Verbose, Flag and Checking, in any combination.

Resetting high message numbers

wcGATE has an additional switch to reset high message numbers to the highest message number in each conference associated with a hub. The proper command line is

```
WCGATE R M H:MUSTANG
```

6 - UUCP mail

An aristocracy in a republic is like a chicken whose head has been cut off: it may run about in a lively way, but in fact it is dead.

Nancy Mitford

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What is UUCP mail?

UUCP is an acronym for "UNIX to UNIX Copy Program". This is a protocol allowing UNIX systems to transmit files, including news groups and E-mail messages, from one machine to another, usually over a dialup connection. *wcGATE* uses a subset of the UUCP protocol, allowing E-mail and newsgroups to be transmitted between a UNIX system to a *Wildcat!* BBS. It allows every user on your BBS to have an Internet "mailing address", and it also allows you to offer Usenet news groups (message echoes) to your callers.

This is not a trivial undertaking nor an inexpensive one — besides the startup and monthly usage fees, users with access to Internet e-mail may well incur substantial phone bills and additional usage charges on your behalf, particularly if they send a lot of mail or subscribe to high-traffic mailing lists.

Also note that this is a "store and forward" mail handling product only. *wcGATE* does not support FTP or Telnet — this is not the product to use for file sends and requests over the Internet, or for remote logons to UNIX systems.

wcGATE automatically translates attached files into UUENCODED format and places the data in the text of the message. In this way, binary files can be "mailed" easily from one system to another, regardless of the operating platforms through which the messages pass.

Locating a UUCP Host Provider

Before you can send and receive mail and news with *wcGATE*, you must locate a UUCP host provider. Selection and setup of a UUCP host provider is solely the responsibility of each system operator.

Several commercial UUCP host providers exist. You can find a representative listing at the end of this chapter, however *Boardwatch* magazine maintains a more up-to-date list of UUCP host providers. Call 1-800-933-6038 for subscription information.

There is a monthly fee for most of these services, and in some cases an hourly fee, plus any long distance phone charges you might incur. Fees generally include technical support and other benefits. Newsgroup conferences are also available by satellite, with e-mail and outgoing newsgroup articles posted via telephone connection. You will find contact information for two satellite services at the end of this book.

Make contact with your selected host provider first by calling the voice number listed for the service, explain that you want to offer Internet e-mail and/or newsgroups on your BBS via UUCP, and request them to set up a domain name (the "mailing address" for your BBS) and a UUCP user account for you. They will explain application procedures, terms of service, and accounting and billing policy. Some systems may not always be in a position to accept new accounts, so you may have to call more than one provider to obtain a connection.

Configuring your UUCP account

Once you have located a UUCP host provider and set up an account, you will need to configure your newsgroup selections and other account information. Because no two host systems are alike, it is impossible to discuss here all the variations you might encounter. When you logon to your UUCP account, it's a good idea to turn on your capture file so you can review your session after you disconnect. This may save some connect time on future calls.

At the core of every UUCP host provider is the UNIX operating system. Depending on how your host is set up, you may or may not have to interact directly with UNIX. Many will offer a menu-driven "shell", somewhat

like the BBS systems you're accustomed to calling. In this case, simply follow the menu prompts and make use of the on-line help and voice technical support available on most commercial systems.

If your host offers only a UNIX prompt, our best advice is to make use of the help files (type "man" followed by a space, then the command you need help with), and get a beginner-level book on UNIX for reference (*UNIX for Dummies* from IDG Books, ISBN 1-878058-58-4, would be a good choice). Ask the system operator (often called "root") for advice on which of the many mail and news programs are available to assist you in selecting newsgroups.

UNIX highlights

UNIX has some features and commands in common with DOS, and comes in two main "flavors": Berkeley UNIX (most popular on the west coast) and AT&T System V (popular on the east coast and Europe). The more comfortable you are using DOS commands, the easier it will be to learn enough UNIX to navigate your host system. This isn't the place for a comprehensive list of UNIX commands, however we will go over some of the highlights briefly here.

UNIX commands, and file and directory names are case-sensitive, meaning that commands may well have different meanings depending on whether they're typed in lower case or caps. File and directory names are not subject to the eight plus three character limitation of DOS, and paths and subdirectories are delimited with a forward slash character rather than a backslash. Command line switches are indicated with a hyphen rather than a forward slash.

UNIX offers very little feedback on whether a command has been executed successfully, or even if you typed it correctly. Be careful — if you type "rm *" (remove everything), that's exactly what UNIX will do. It won't even ask "are you sure?" before deleting all your files.

Don't just hang up on a UNIX system if you can possibly avoid it — it might not notice you're gone for some time, and you may continue to build up connect charges. To logout, type "logout" or CTRL D. The first command works on some UNIX flavors, the second command on the rest.

If you use the wrong command to logout, UNIX will usually tell you the correct one.

Adding a host

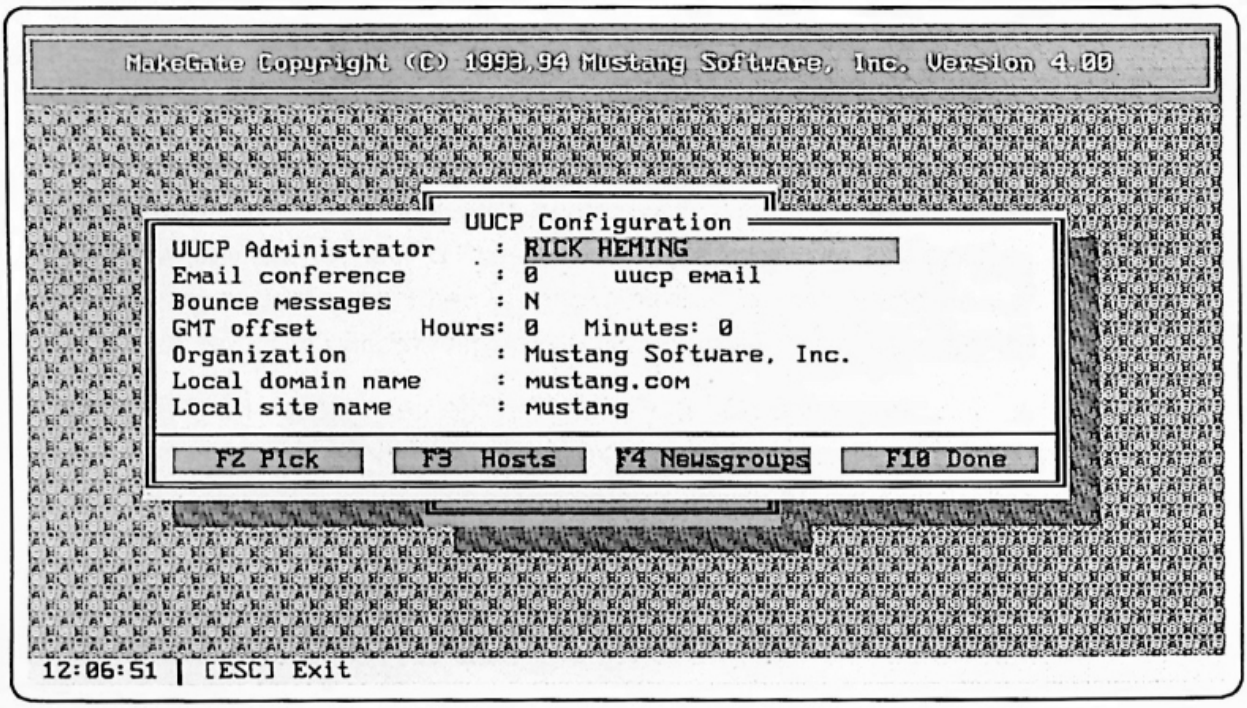
Your first step, if you haven't already done so, is to run *MAKEWILD* to create conferences in *Wildcat!* for Internet E-mail, and for any newsgroups or mailing lists you plan to offer.

The next step is to make arrangements with your UUCP host provider to turn on E-mail, and any newsgroups you wish to receive. The procedure for doing this may vary from one system to another, so you will need to ask your host for specific instructions. When these newsgroups have been selected, your host will automatically begin creating mail files for you.

The third step, once you have selected the newsgroups from your host, is to add those conferences to *Wildcat!* using *MAKEWILD*. It's useful to remember that the *Wildcat!* conference name need not necessarily be the same as the newsgroup name.

The final step is to add the newsgroups to *MAKEGATE* so *wcGATE* knows where to put the mail. A newsgroup must be added both to *MAKEWILD* (via the conference definition screen) *and* to *MAKEGATE* in order for the conference to be imported.

Local options



Now that you have defined your UUCP conferences in *MAKEWILD*, run *MAKEGATE* to configure your UUCP mail system as an Internet site. Select UUCP Network from the main menu, then fill in each option as described below.

UUCP Administrator

This is the person who is responsible for your system. This user must be a user in *Wildcat!* user database, usually the System Operator. Any E-mail that is addressed to root, Sysop, or postmaster will be re-addressed to the Administrator's name.

Email conference

This option allows you to select a single *Wildcat!* conference for sending and receiving "private" E-mail between UUCP sites.

To select your E-mail conference in *MAKEGATE*, move the cursor to the "E-mail Conference" line, and press F2 to pop up a selection list of available *Wildcat!* conference selections. Move your highlight bar to the desired conference, and press ENTER to confirm your selection. You will then return to the UUCP Configuration main menu.

This conference should be created in *MAKEWILD* and set to "Internet E-Mail", to provide some measure of security for local messages. Also remember to set the "Check Valid Name" setting under "Miscellaneous" to "No" so your users can address messages to people whose names are not in the BBS user file. Avoid using the same E-mail conference for different types of mail — each mail type should have its own separate area.

Bounce messages

When mail software is unable to deliver a message, the software delivers a "Bounce Message" back to the original sender. The bounce message usually provides some information on the nature of the problem — a misspelled or unknown user name is one of the most frequent reasons a message is undeliverable.

If this option is turned ON, *wcGATE* will send a "bounce message" when it is unable to translate the internet address on an incoming message into a valid user name on the local *Wildcat!* BBS. However, this slows down mail processing because *wcGATE* has to open the user file to look up user records.

Turning this option OFF speeds up message insertion, at the cost of not informing users sending mail to your system that their messages were undeliverable.

GMT offset

This is the difference in hours between local standard time and Greenwich Mean Time. For instance, the Pacific Daylight Saving (PDT) time zone is -7 (minus seven) hours and 0 minutes.

Organization

This field is optional, and allows you to put a very brief description of your company or organization. If you enter information in this field, any E-mail message or newsgroup article will have this information placed in the "Organization" field in the message header.

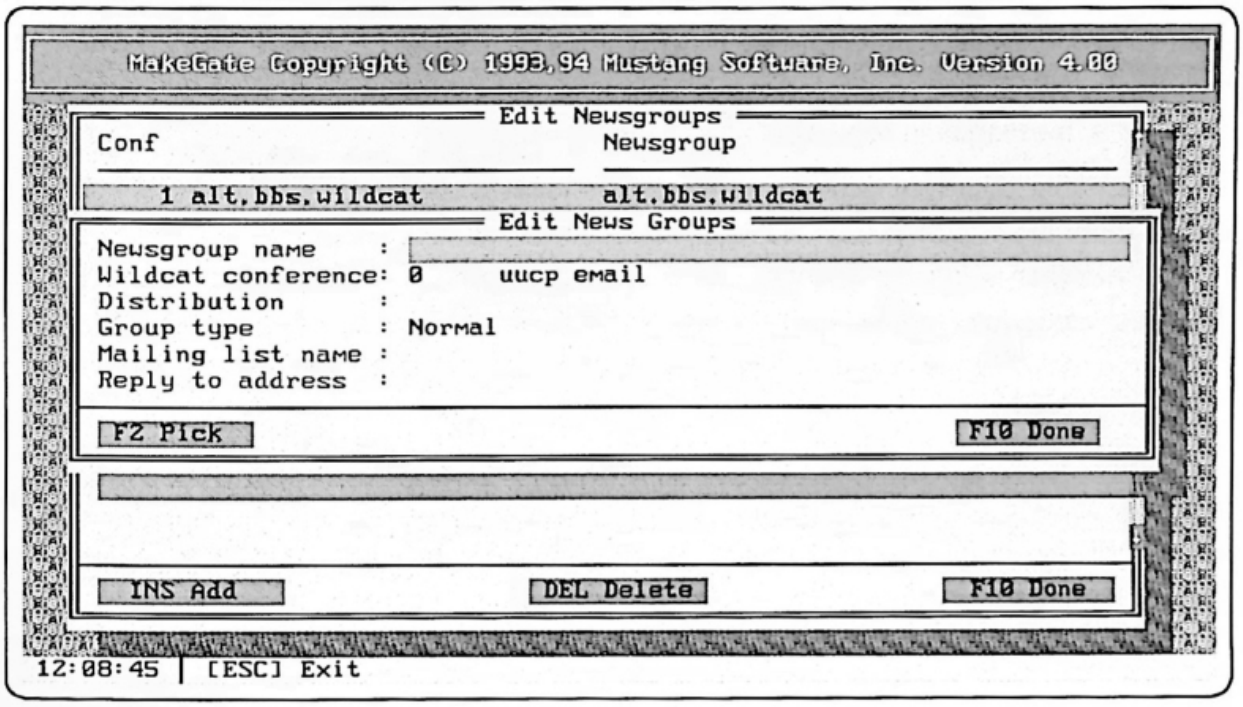
Local domain name

This is your "fully qualified" Internet domain name (for example MUSTANG.COM). This name is assigned to you by your UUCP host provider. A "fully qualified" domain name is a combination of your site name, a period, and additional domain information. For instance, MUSTANG is MSI's site name, COM is the domain (COM is short for "commercial" as opposed to EDU for "educational" or ORG "organization").

Local site name

The site name is often referred to as your "machine name". The Site Name is often, but not always, the first part of your domain name. For instance, the site name for MUSTANG.COM is "mustang". wcGATE uses the sitename field to identify messages according to UUCP standards. The proper name for this field is available from your UUCP host provider. If you aren't sure what to put here, ask your host.

Defining Newsgroups



The F4 Newsgroups button pops up the Newsgroup editing window. From here you can add, edit and delete newsgroups which you later assign to hosts.

Newsgroups are public Echomail conferences, organized by topic. In contrast to E-mail, which is private, "person-to-person" E-mail, newsgroup messages, or "articles" are addressed to "ALL", and are always public.

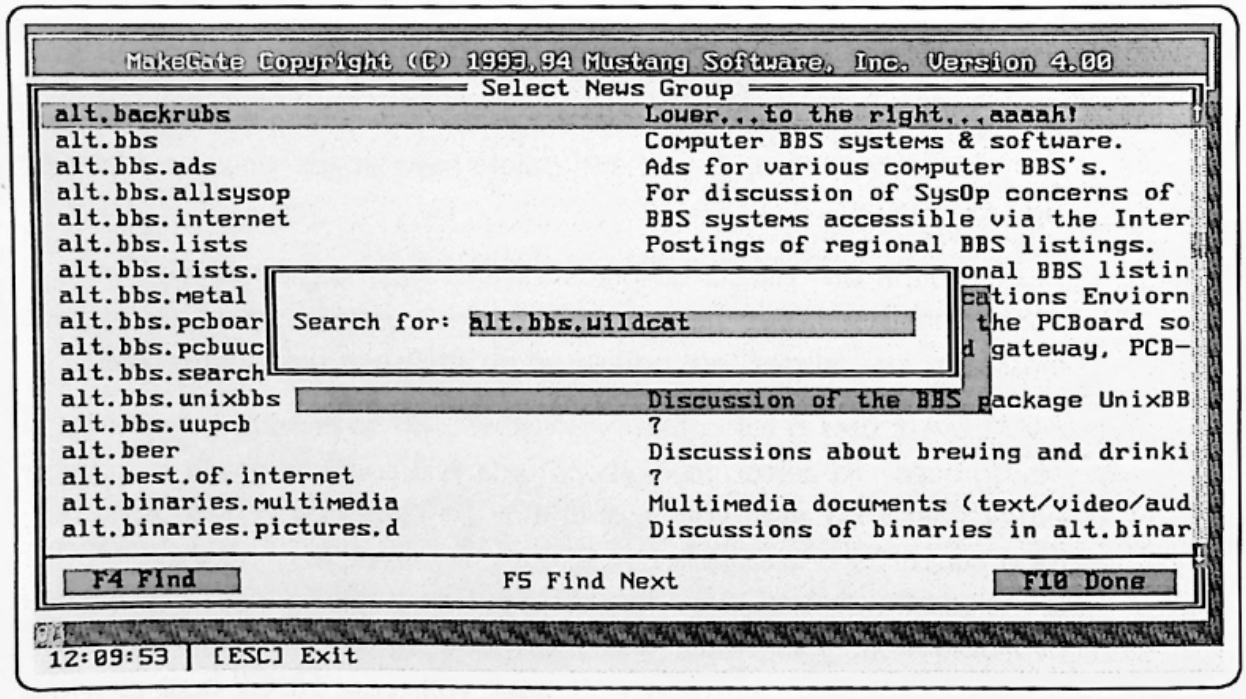
MAKEGATE uses a file called NEWSGRPS.TXT to provide a master list of newsgroups. To select newsgroups, you will need to obtain a copy of NEWSGRPS.TXT from your host (it may be called NEWSGROUPS.TXT), for a current list of available newsgroups. An example of NEWSGRPS.TXT is included with *wcGATE*. This list may show newsgroups that are not available from your hosts, and likewise does not contain some newsgroups which may be available. Check with your UUCP host provider for an updated version of NEWSGRPS.TXT which reflects the selection of newsgroups available at your host.

Your host provider may have one or more local newsgroups designed for testing purposes. Your first selection should be one of these, if offered. This is where your "test" messages should go. Once you have verified that your mail is traveling to and from your host provider, you can go ahead and add additional newsgroups. It is considered bad form to post echo test messages in regular USENET newsgroups.

Newsgroup name

This is the UUCP name of the newsgroup you wish to add. Press F2 to pop up a selection list from NEWSGRPS.TXT, select the group you want to add, and press ENTER to import the name into the Newsgroup Name field.

Since the list may contain thousands of possible selections, you can use the Find button to help you locate the newsgroup you're looking for. Press F4 to pop up the "Find" window, and enter the text to find. Press ENTER to begin searching.



The first newsgroup name with text matching your search string will be highlighted, with a description of the newsgroup, if available. If this isn't the one you're looking for, press F5 to continue searching. When you've located the newsgroup you wish to select, press F10 to confirm your selection and return to the "Edit News Groups" window.

Wildcat! conference

This is the *Wildcat!* conference for this newsgroup. Type in the conference number, or press F2 for a list of conferences from *MAKEWILD*. Use the highlight bar to select the *Wildcat!* conference use, then press ENTER to save your selection.

Distribution

This field is optional, and the default is "WORLD", meaning that any newsgroup article sent from your site will be "broadcast" to the world. If you prefer to limit distribution to a specific area or areas, you may list the names of these areas, separated by commas.

```
CA,WA,OR
```

for instance, would limit distribution to California, Washington and Oregon.

Your UUCP host provider can tell you what names are valid for your distribution list. This information changes as new systems are added to the Internet, but as a general rule of thumb, states are designated by their two-letter postal abbreviation, cities with a two or three letter abbreviation and so on.

Group type

wcGATE supports three types of newsgroups: Normal, Mailing List and Moderated.

Normal

A normal newsgroup is unmoderated, meaning that anyone with an interest in the newsgroup can post an article or follow-up.

Mailing List

A mailing list is like a newsgroup, but distributed as e-mail rather than as news. By default, mailing list messages are posted as e-mail, in your e-mail conference, addressed to the user who subscribed to the list.

If you or your callers subscribe to mailing lists and you prefer to route the mailing list messages to their own conferences, select "Mailing List" as the group type. *wcGATE* will automatically route replies to the mailing list name and reply-to address you enter below.

Moderated

A moderated newsgroup is one where all posts must be sent by e-mail to the moderator, who then posts approved articles in the newsgroup. The description of the newsgroup in NEWSGRPS.TXT will usually indicate if a group is moderated. *wcGATE* will automatically route outgoing messages to the group's moderator at the reply-to address, as private e-mail.

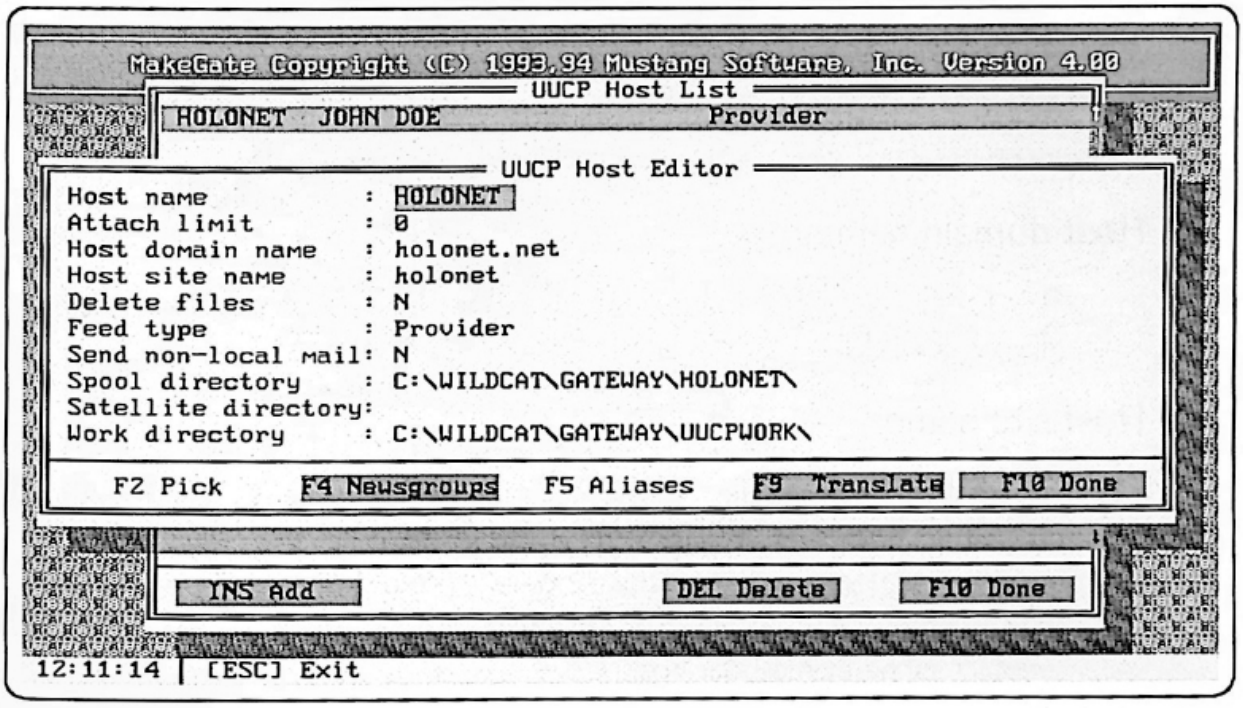
Mailing list name

This is the name of the mailing list, for instance HUMOR or BGRASS-L. *wcGATE* will look for this mailing list name in the message header, to re-direct the messages from the private e-mail conference to the conference you have defined for this mailing list.

Reply to address

This is the e-mail address of the moderator or mailing list to which replies should be directed, for instance humor@uga.cc.uga.edu. *wcGATE* will send replies as e-mail addressed directly to the list name or moderator name.

Defining Hosts



Now that you have defined your local options, including Email conference and newsgroups, you're ready to define the hosts with whom you will be connecting to pick up your mail.

Host name

This is the name *wcGATE* and *MAKEGATE* use to create configuration files and subdirectories for this host. This must be a legal DOS file name, and can be no more than 8 characters long. The Host Name normally matches the Host Site Name.

Attach limit

This is the maximum size in kilobytes for outgoing file attachments. Internet uses a special protocol for sending binary files as messages, to allow for the difference in data and parity bits between systems. This protocol allows a pair of utilities known as UUENCODE and UUDECODE to send

binary files as mail at the source, and reconstruct that mail back into binary files at the destination.

wcGATE will UUENCODE any files attached to messages, and will incorporate this encoded text into the body of the message. Note that *wcGATE* cannot determine the size of incoming UUENCODED attachments, and therefore does not limit the size of incoming files.

Host domain name

This is the fully qualified domain name for your host, for instance HOLONET.NET.

Host site name

This is the UUCP name of the host site, without extension (for example HOLONET — *not* HOLONET.NET). The host UUCP site name is often referred to as your host's "machine name". Note that in most cases this is the site name only, not the fully qualified domain name. If you are unsure what to put here, ask your host.

Delete files

This is a Yes/No option, and the default is **Yes**. Normally, when *wcGATE* has finished importing packets, you want to delete the packets to prevent them from being re-imported the next time you run *wcGATE*. You should set this option to **No** ONLY if you are going to do further processing on the packets. Remember to delete the packets when you have finished processing them, or *wcGATE* will try to import the same messages the next time you run the program.

Feed type

wcGATE lets you define two types of hosts: Providers and Downline Nodes. A Provider is a host you call to pick up UUCP mail. A Downline Node is a host that calls you to pick up UUCP mail. If you are only picking up mail, without distributing it to other sites via UUCP, set up your host as a **Provider**. If you pass mail on to other hosts, set them up as **Downline Nodes**.

Send non-local mail

This is a Yes/No option, and the default is **No**. Only change this to **Yes** for your **Provider** host. wcGATE uses this information to determine if E-mail should be routed directly to known Downline Nodes or forwarded to your host provider for distribution.

Paths

Spool directory

This is the directory where *wcGATE* expects to find incoming mail packets collected by *UUCICO*. The default path is

```
\WILDCAT\GATEWAY\[hostname]
```

where [hostname] is a subdirectory with the host name of your host provider.

Note: With the exception of your Wildcat! home directory and the [hostname] directory names, these paths are hard-coded, and must be entered exactly as shown. If these path names are changed, wcGATE will not function correctly.

Satellite directory

This is the directory where *wcGATE* expects to find incoming mail packets (.BAG files) received by satellite.

Work directory

This is the directory *wcGATE* uses to create temporary files as it imports and exports mail.

The recommended default is \WILDCAT\GATEWAY\UUCPWORK.

Newsgroups

The newsgroups screen is where you assign the newsgroups you configured to this host. The list shows each *Wildcat!* conference number, the *Wildcat!* conference name and the newsgroup name. Press SPACE to toggle

a newsgroup selection for this host, [ALT] [S] to turn on all newsgroups, [ALT] [C] to turn all newsgroups off.

Translation

wcGATE automatically handles the translation of user names between *Wildcat!* and UUCP addressing formats. Spaces are replaced with periods (.), and the domain name is appended automatically. For instance, a user named SCOTT HUNTER posts an E-mail message at MSI HQ BBS, addressed to a user at another UUCP site.

When *wcGATE* exports the message, the "From" field in the message is automatically translated to look like this:

```
From: scott.hunter@mustang.com
```

Likewise, a user named "JOHN P. FRIEL" would be translated automatically as

```
john.p..friel
```

Translation tables provide additional conversion options on incoming and outgoing E-mail messages. It is *not* necessary to provide name translations through this option simply to allow users to send and receive mail, since *wcGATE* looks after this automatically. Note also that translations and Trashcan entries work only with E-Mail, and *not* with newsgroups.

In the case of an incorrectly addressed incoming message, *wcGATE* will insert the message into your E-mail conference, and, if "bounce messages" is set to Yes, sends a message back to the originator indicating that the addressee's name was not found on the domain to which it was sent.

If a name on your *Wildcat!* system is frequently misspelled, it might be advisable to translate incoming messages from the incorrect name to the corrected name, so that the intended recipient actually receives their mail.

You may wish to publish "generic" E-mail addresses, for instance "sales@mustang.com" or "support@mustang.com", and have those messages directed to members of your staff.

Finally, there may be individuals who for some reason should not be allowed to send or receive E-mail on your system. The "Trashcan" list is for these cases.

All translation and Trashcan entries allow you to select translation of incoming mail only, outgoing mail only, or both incoming and outgoing.

Add/Edit

These two options pop up a dialog box allowing you to enter the following information:

Wildcat! Name

This is the name your user is known by on your *Wildcat!* BBS. For instance, "SAM ROBERTSON" or "GREG HEWGILL".

External Name

This is the name or names by which your user may be known outside your system, for instance "srobertson" or "greg".

Action

This is the action to be performed on messages matching the *Wildcat!* name or the External name.

Translate Import

Our example user is a local user on the BBS. He is known as "SAM ROBERTSON" on the BBS, and "srobertson" to some of his correspondents via UUCP. Incoming mail addressed to "srobertson" will be redirected to "SAM ROBERTSON". The domain name "@mustang.com" is not considered as part of the translation. Any mail addressed to "sam.robertson" is already correctly addressed, and will not be translated.

Translate Export

Our example user is located at a different UUCP site. She is known as "KORINNA KURSIV" to users on the local BBS, but her proper UUCP address is "korinna.heavy@dingbat.com" Outgoing mail to "KORINNA

KURSIV" will be readdressed to her proper UUCP name when mail is exported.

Export translations are also useful in the case where you correspond with someone whose full UUCP address is too long for the To: field in the message header, or is otherwise cumbersome to type. Our example here is "j.r.bob.dobbs@ultimate.slack.org".

Create a translation entry of "JRB" as the local name, and "j.r.bob.dobbs@ultimate.slack.org" as the external name, and messages addressed to "JRB" will be translated to his full mailing address when mail is sent to your UUCP host.

Translate Both

Our example user is Bob Allman, a salesperson at MSI. He wants to use a "generic" address on UUCP to answer sales inquiries, but does not want to create another user account on the BBS to receive personal mail. His *Wildcat!* Name will be "BOB ALLMAN", while his External Name is "sales". Incoming mail addressed to "sales@mustang.com" will be readdressed to "BOB ALLMAN", while outgoing mail from Bob will be sent from "sales@mustang.com".

Trashcan Incoming

Any incoming messages addressed to the specified Internal Name will not be inserted.

Trashcan Outgoing

Any outgoing messages addressed to the specified External Name will not be exported.

Delete

Use the [DEL] key to delete an entry from your Translation/Trashcan list. A window will pop up to confirm the deletion.

Picking up the mail

Now that you have all your conferences configured and any necessary name translations entered, you're ready to begin picking up mail. This is a three-step procedure. First, run *wcGATE* to export your outgoing mail and queue up the messages for distribution by UUCICO.

Exporting mail

wcGATE is a command line utility to import and export mail. On the command line, you specify whether to import or export mail, the type of mail packet to read or create (in this case UUCP), and the name of the host packet to read or create.

A proper command line to export UUCP Mail looks like this:

```
WCGATE EXPORT UUCP HUB:MUSTANG
```

wcGATE will scan your message conferences, and exports outgoing messages for distribution by UUCICO. *wcGATE* exits to DOS automatically when the operation is complete.

One additional option is available when you export mail:

Verbose

If you want *wcGATE* to log its activity in detail, including the message header and conference information for each message it imports or exports, add the word VERBOSE to the end of the command line, like this:

```
WCGATE E U H:MUSTANG V
```

Notice that you can abbreviate the words "Export", "UUCP", "Host" and "Verbose" to the single letters "E", "U", "H" and "V".

Without the "Verbose" switch, *wcGATE* will log only the total number of messages imported or exported in each conference.

Importing mail

A proper command line to import UUCP Mail looks like this:

```
WCGATE IMPORT UUCP HOST:MUSTANG
```

wcGATE will collect any incoming messages queued up by UUCICO, then imports them to your *Wildcat!* message conferences.

You can use single-letter abbreviations for the command line options. The following command line is also valid:

```
WCGATE I U H:MUSTANG
```

wcGATE will collect the messages queued up by UUCICO, then imports those messages into your UUCP conferences. When it has finished importing, it exits to DOS without further action on your part.

wcGATE offers two additional options for importing a UUCP mail packet.

Flag

By default, *wcGATE* will notify users of incoming mail addressed to them. Since *wcGATE* needs to open the user database and check each user record as it imports mail, this can slow down importing, particularly if few of the messages are likely to be addressed to callers on your BBS.

Callers will still receive messages addressed to them if *wcGATE* does not update their user information, but they will not be notified of new mail when they logon to *Wildcat!*.

A sample command line that imports MHS Echomail from a host named MUSTANG, but does not notify local users of new mail, would look like this:

```
WCGATE IMPORT UUCP HOST:MUSTANG FLAG
```

The abbreviated version looks like this:

```
WCGATE I U H:MUSTANG F
```

Checking

Configuration errors on other systems can sometimes cause mail to be recycled, and can result in duplicates of existing messages in your network mail packets. *wcGATE* and *wcMAIL* create and maintain a set of duplicate message checking files with the extension .CRC, one for each conference, in the path for message files. If a new message is an exact duplicate (including to/from names, message text and origin lines), *wcGATE* will reject the new message.

If you are not concerned about importing duplicate messages, you can speed up mail imports by turning off duplicate checking. Here's an example:

```
WCGATE IMPORT UUCP HOST:MUSTANG CHECKING
```

and the abbreviated version:

```
WCGATE I U H:MUSTANG C
```

Note that you can use these options, Verbose, Flag and Checking, in any combination.

Resetting high message numbers

wcGATE has an additional switch to reset high message numbers to the highest message number in each conference associated with a host. The proper command line is

```
WCGATE R U H:MUSTANG
```

Running UUCICO

UUCICO (UNIX to UNIX Copy In Copy Out) performs all modem communication with the remote system, and is responsible for protocol selection, implementation, error correction, and file transfer. In addition, it removes transferred files at the host, and keeps a log of all activity. Mustang Software Inc. has licensed a special version of FX UUCICO for distribution with *wcGATE*.

UUCICO is usually run from a batch file or directly from the command prompt. There are two different modes of operation, dial-out or master mode, and dial-in or slave mode.

Quick Start

wcGATE's installation program will have copied the necessary configuration files for UUCICO into your WCGATE directory. You will need to edit each of these files to reference the correct modems, ports, domain and site names, user IDs and passwords. Here are some sample configuration files:

FXUUCP.CFG

```
device          : 1
speed           : 19200
uu.locked       : 19200
node            : <YOURDOMAIN>.holonet.net
uucpname        : <YOURSITE>
spool           : c:\wildcat\wcgate\fxuucp
uu.retries      : 1
uu.handshake    : 60
uu.time         : 60
uu.windows      : 3
```

PERMITS

```
default    /system=known
```

SYSTEMS

```
holonet Any g modem14400 toholonet <PHONE> <*USERID> <PASSWORD>
```

DIALERS

```
MODEM14400    Default  19200   "" ATZ OK ATDT\T CONNECT \m\c
```

SCRIPTS

```
toholonet name? \L word \P
```

UUCP.BAT

```
c:
cd \wildcat
wcgate export UUCP host:holonet
cd \wildcat\gateway
uucico -sholonet
cd \wildcat
wcgate import UUCP host:holonet
```

Creating a logon script for your host

Two configuration files, SYSTEMS and SCRIPTS, provide information to UUCICO that allow it to dial the phone, connect, recognize prompts from the host, and send appropriate responses. You will need to customize these two files to match the prompts your host is likely to send.

You should start by editing the SYSTEMS file to put your own information in, following this format:

```
<hostname> <time> <protocol> <dialer> <scriptname> <userid> <password>
```

Your next step is to dial your service using your regular communication software, and open your capture file so you have an example of the system prompts and responses to enter in your SCRIPTS file.

The SCRIPTS file follows this format:

```
<scriptname> <expect> <send> <expect> <send> . . .
```

SCRIPTNAME is the name of the script referenced in your SYSTEMS file for this host. The expect-send-expect-send sequence is the actual series of prompts and responses that log you into the host.

Here is a sample capture file with line numbers, showing the logon sequence at Holonet:

```
1.  ATZ0
2.  OK
3.  atdt95107041058
4.  CONNECT 14400

5.  Annex Command Line Interpreter   *   Copyright 1991 Xylogics, Inc.

6.  HoloPacket(SM) - HIGH SPEED ACCESS TO HOLONET(SM) SERVICES

7.  To access HoloNet type "holonet" at the service prompt

8.  HoloPacket Class A/B -- Service name ("?" for help):
9.  service: holonet
10. Trying...
11. Connected to zen.


12. HoloNet(SM) -- A service of IAT

13. HoloNet Member Name (Non-members type "guest"): rheming
14. Password:
15. Last login: Tue May 17 11:34:16 from annex
16. Please enter your terminal type (? for examples) or <CR> for none:
```

We'll call this script "toholonet". The first prompt that expects a response is line 9, "service". The response is "holonet". The next prompt is the login prompt, and all we need to enter here is enough to identify it uniquely. The word "member" will work well here.

You'll remember that the UserID and password are stored in the SYSTEMS file. Our script will extract those two fields automatically with the responses \L for login name and \P for password. So, the proper response for the prompt "member" will be "\L". The next prompt is "Password", so the answer is "\P".

The final prompt asks for the terminal type. For an automated UUCP session, the proper response is "uucp". From that point onward, UUCICO will take control and automatically sends and receives mail, then disconnects from the host. UUCICO automatically sends a carriage return after each response.

Our finished SCRIPTS file would look like this:

```
toholonet service: holonet Member \L Password: \P terminal uucp
```

Some systems need to be "woken up" before they will prompt you to log on. In this case, the script should send carriage returns until it gets a response it recognizes, then it can proceed with logging you on. The expect-send sequence for "blank screen" "send carriage return" would look like this:

```
"" \r
```

Or you may need to send a BREAK signal ... the command would look like this:

```
"" BREAK
```

Additional script commands are discussed in the section titled "Script Syntax".

UUCICO reference guide

Master mode

The dial-out mode is for placing a call, usually known as polling. This is the default mode and only requires you to specify the sites you want to call with the -s parameter. The -s parameter has three different usage conditions:

Keyword	Notes
-s all	polls all known hosts
-s any	polls hosts with queued jobs -
s host[,hostlist]	polls specified host[s]

For every outgoing call, UUCICO will run two scripts, the dialer and the login scripts as specified in the "systems" file. The dialer script initializes and dials the modem. The login script accesses your remote host uucp services.

Slave mode

Dial-in mode receives incoming calls. The -r0 parameter signals UUCICO to enter slave mode. Obviously the -r0 and -s parameters are mutually exclusive. FX will not currently pick up the phone or prompt for login by itself. This task must be performed by *Wildcat!*.

In both modes optional parameters may be used. These are discussed later, in the section on Configuration.

Aborting the Connection

UUCICO can be interrupted with two different keys. [CTRL] [BREAK] will abort immediately, with no attempt to recover or update log files. UUCICO will hang up the line and exit the program.

[CTRL] [K] produces a soft break. When UUCICO detects this key it will close the connection in a clean and orderly fashion. This has the advantage of updating all the logs, informing the remote host, and flushing any internal buffers. It may take a few moments for UUCICO to react.

Configuration

While the default options are usually enough for most *wcGATE* users, FX UUCICO is highly configurable. Most settings default to reasonable values. At the minimum you must supply the appropriate "systems" entries, your computer name, device and port speed; everything else is optional.

Five configuration files are required: FXUUCP.CFG, SYSTEMS, DIALERS, SCRIPTS and PERMITS. All five configuration files, along with UUCICO.EXE *must* be located in your \WILDCAT\GATEWAY directory. Examples of each file are provided, and have been installed in your WCGATE directory. Most will require editing before use.

The main configuration file is called FXUUCP.CFG, and must be located in your WCGATE directory. You can override the configuration by specifying a different path in an environment variable such as

```
SET FXUUCP=c:\fxuucp\fxuucp.cfg
```

FXUUCP.CFG configuration file

The syntax for items in your FXUUCP.CFG file is: "option : setting". Case is not sensitive, free white space may be added or omitted at both sides of the ":" separator. The option name must start on the first column. Unknown keywords are skipped without warning, A "#" or ";" in the first column is conventionally used as a comment line and is ignored by UUCICO.

Some option are booleans that may be enabled or disabled:

```
yes, true, 1 = enabled

no, false, 0 = disabled
```

The following entries must be present in the configuration file:

Keyword	Notes
device	Default port number of your serial/modem device. In the case of a DigiBoard card, like *Wildcat!*, the port number corresponds to the DOS name, not the Digi channel number. For instance device: 5 would select Digi channel number 4, which would be COM5.
speed	Default speed setting of the serial port
spool	Directory path for queuing outgoing and receiving incoming jobs. One subdirectory will be created for each connecting host.
uucpname	Your machine name as known by your neighbors. It must match the "system" entry in your remote host.

Other useful options:

Keyword	Notes
uu.debug	Debug level, controls the amount of info written to the "uucico" and "debug" logs.
uu.driver	Selects between "NATIVE", "DIGI" or "FOSSIL" driver. Overrides "driver".
uu.locked	Locked port speed. UUCICO will use always this setting and disregard any other speed options.
uu.time	Time-out in seconds for scripts executions.
uu.visual	Debug level, controls the amount of message displayed on the screen.
fx.gPktSize	Default packet size for the "g" protocols family
fx.share	Enables the networking features of FX UUCICO.
include	Include additional information from a separate configuration file. For instance "include: c:\mydir\config3". There is no limit to the number of files, and files can be nested up to four levels deep.

Some parameters, typically the packet size, may be configured in a per systems basis using the "permits" file.

"systems" file

The "systems" file describes the remote hosts you are connecting with, usually called neighbors. At least one line must be present for each one. Multiple entries for the same host are allowed specifying different dialing numbers or changing other parameters. Multiple entries will result in UUCICO using them in sequence when retrying a failed connection.

The format of the "systems" file is:

```
#host    time   protocol  dialer     script   phone-number  login    password
laser    Any    g         Hayes.2400 toUnix   123-45678     uulaser  secret
```

Keyword	Notes
host	Equivalent to your uucpname. Your neighbors must list your name in their "systems" or equivalent file.
time	Allowed times for placing outgoing calls. See below for a description of this field.
protocol	Single letter. Selects the protocol on outgoing calls.
dialer	Dialer script. This is not a literal script, but the name of a matching entry in the "dialers" file.
script	Login script. Same as above.
phone	Telephone number of your remote host. Will replace \T escapes in scripts.
login	Your login name that will grant you access on the remote machine. Replaces \L in scripts.
password	Password for to the login. Replaces \P in scripts.

Only the first field (host) is used in incoming calls. The last three entries are optional and normally not needed in direct serial links.

"dialers" file

```
#Dialer-name   device    speed      dialer-script
Hayes.2400     Any       default    "" AT OK ATD\T CONNECT \m\c
```

Keyword	Notes
dialer	Name of the entry. UUCICO will search for a matching entry as specified in the "systems" dialer field.
device	Overrides default device port in the config file.
speed	Overrides default speed in the configuration file.
script	The rest of the line is the actual dialer script. Script syntax is described below

"scripts" file

```
#script-name   login-script
toUnix         in:--in: \L ord: \P
```

Keyword	Notes
script-name	Name of the entry.
login-script	The rest of the line is the actual login script.

scripts syntax

Scripts are a very powerful tool. Note that because of the script design, uucico is less smart that normal communication programs. It doesn't have a specific command for dialing, nor a fixed sequence of initialization commands. It's all up to you to make it as complex or simple as you wish or need. The dialer script is performed first, and then the login script.

The scripts are formed by pairs of send/expect sequences. Send tokens are transmitted to the serial port and then UUCICO waits for the expect token. If the expect token doesn't arrive in time, the alternate token (if present) is sent, otherwise the script fails. The syntax define special escape sequences that are replaced at run time. Tokens that are not alternate are separated by free white space. Empty tokens may be set with a pair of double quotes.

```
"" ATZ OK ATD123-45678 CONNECT
```

Long scripts may be continued in the next line placing free whitespace (one or more spaces and/or tabs) in the continuation line. Using this method there is no formal limit to the scrip length.

```
gin: \L word: \P service: uucp gateway: direct age: 20
    hobbies: soccer others: ENOUGH!
```

A pair of dashes signal an alternate sequence. The token between the dashes is sent, and the script expects a new token after the last dash.

```
in:-BREAK-in: \L
```

In this example, if the in: token is not found, a BREAK is sent and then another in: is expected.

Escapes allowed in send tokens only:

Token	Notes
\ooo	Send any byte represented in octal notation.
\c	Suppress ending carriage return. By default all send tokens have a carriage return appended.
\d	Delay of two seconds.
\E	Turn echo check on. Valid for this token only. It is very useful for some modems that are slow receiving commands, and tend to lose some characters.

Token	Notes
\e	Turn echo check off.
\K	Send break signal. This is basically an antique for old UNIX dialers.
\L	Replaced by the login name field in the "systems" entry.
\m	Turn carrier checking on. By default carrier detect is not sampled during scripts execution.
\M	Turn off carrier checking during the rest of the script.
\p	Delay of approximately half a second.
\P	Replaced by the current password.
\S	Replaced by the remote host uucp name.
\T	Replaced by the phone number field in the "systems" entry.
BREAK	Send a break signal
P_NONE	Sets the comm line to 8 bits no parity.
P_EVEN	Set the line to 7 bits even parity. Normally valid for the login sequence only. Most protocols will revert back to 8 bits no parity.
P_ODD	Set the line to 7 bits odd parity. Same note as above.

Escapes allowed in both send and expect tokens:

Token	Notes
\b	Backspace
\m	Carriage return
\n	Line feed
\r	Carriage return
\s	Space
\t	Tab
\\	Backslash

A ~ddd sequence at the end of any expect string overrides the default time-out (uu.time and -t) in seconds for expect-send sequences:

```
uu.time : 10
"" AT OK ATDP\P CONNECT~60
```

The OK must arrives ten seconds after the AT command, but the CONNECT message may take up to 60 seconds.

"permits" file

The "permits" file controls security issues. FX also uses the "permits" file to change some common parameters between different systems. It doesn't have a fixed field format as the other configuration files. Each entry is started with a name that identifies this permit. Other parameters may be added in any order.

The selection of the current permit uses the following algorithm:

If -p <permit> was received from the command line, UUCICO looks for the named permit, otherwise fails. Else (no -p parameter) UUCICO

searches for a permit name matching the remote system name. If not found UUCICO searches for the permit named "default".

Note that the -p parameter, forces a specific permit and prevents using the "default" one. Without a matching permit the connection will not be performed.

The "fx.joinDefPermit" configuration modifies the exact behavior of the "default" permit and the default values assumed for options not present in the current permit.

When "fx.joinDefPermit" is off (default), the permit named "default" doesn't affect parameters on other permits. Parameters not specified in the current permit, are considered not present and assume internal defaults.

When "fx.joinDefPermit" is on, the permit named "default" is always parsed. Parameters not specified in the current permit, inherit settings from the "default" permit. This is very useful to set global parameters without restricting to a single permit.

Each parameter starts with a slash. The "=" character separates the keyword from the value. Spaces or tabs must be present between parameters. Line continuation is fully supported, and it is customary to put each parameter in a single line. Many are relevant for dial-in calls only.

The sample PERMITS file provided with wcGATE should work without modification.

Keyword	Notes
/account	Login name allowed for this permit. This option in conjunction with the -u parameter is the key for a secure system. Dial-in only
/speed	Minimum connect speed. Dial-in only.
/time	Allowed dial-in calls. Same syntax as the time field on "systems". "never" disables dial-in for this permit.
/system	Use "any" to allow for anonymous uucp.

Keyword	Notes
/download	Download directory for sending non-job files. It is enforced on remote requests only. Specify a single name only, multiple directories are not supported. It may be an absolute path, or a relative subdir from the "spool" directory. See "fx.trusted" All download requests are denied if not present.
/upload	Upload directory for receiving non-job files. Same notes as "download".
/fx.trusted	Boolean option. Normally FX expands non-job requests under the "download" or "upload" settings. The remote user cannot specify an absolute path. It must use the ~/ uucp convention or a simple file name without path. Enabling this option grants full access to the whole file systems. Every request is accepted as long as it is not denied by the operating system. Note, this produces a SERIOUS SECURITY HOLE. Use only for yourself, or really "trusted" users.
/fx.maxtime	Maximum time in seconds allowed for the connection. The timer starts counting from the end of the uucp handshake. FX checks for time exceeded between job transactions, it will not abort the current file. The limit is per session only, no daily total is maintained.
/fx.maxbytes	Maximum total bytes allowed for transmission. The value represent the sum of bytes sent plus received. Same notes as "fx.maxtime"
/fx.gpktsize	Overrides the "g" and "G" protocols packet size. If you have increased the global packet size, put a 64 value for systems that do not support large packets. Or, leave the global packet size at 64 bytes, and set larger values for specific systems.

Keyword	Notes
/uu.windows	Overrides the "g" and "G" protocols window size.
/fx.shortpkts	Overrides the -S flag for enabling/disabling variable packets on the "g" protocol. Boolean option.

Example:

```
laser      /account=uuslaer
           /commands=rnews,rmail (not used by UUCICO)
           /download=d:\home\mydir
           /upload="uploads"
           /time=any
           /fx.gpktsize=1024
           /fx.maxtime=3600
```

Time field format

Time fields are present in the "systems" and "permits" files. The "systems" enforces dialout calls and the "permits" enforces dialin calls.

A time description starts with a special abbreviated keyword and may be optionally followed by a numeric range. Multiple entries separated by commas "," are supported. The time will be validated if it matches any one of the entries.

Keyword	Notes
Any	Matches any day.
Never	No match. Disables dialout calls in "systems" and dialins in "permits"
Evening	Matches any time on Saturday and Sunday

Keyword	Notes
dd	Matches the specific day(s), one or more of: Su, Mo, Tu, We, Th, Fr, Sa, Wk "Wk" matches any day expect Sunday and Saturday A "military" time range may be added after the keyword to further restrict the entry. Military times are four decimal digits in the format "hhmm"
SaSu2000-2300	Matches Saturday and Sunday from 20:00 to 23:00
Any1000-1600,M	Matches any day from 10 Am to 4 Pm, and Monday at any time.

Command line parameters

Command line parameters cover runtime options that override settings in the configuration file. A few of them, are available only as runtime parameters and cannot be set in the config file. With the exception of -r0 or -s that specify dialin-dialout mode, none of the options are strictly required.

The switches follow the syntax of the traditional UNIX "getopt" parsing, with the following rules:

- Options are case sensitive
- You cannot use "/" as the switch character, only "-"
- Multiple options may be folded in a single parameter (-aoV)
- Options that require arguments may have, but do not require spaces before the argument: -r 3
- List arguments cannot have spaces in the middle of the list: "-s host1, host2" is incorrect, use "-s host1,host2"

Following is a complete list of valid parameters for FX UUCICO. Overrides "xxx" means that the option takes precedence over the "xxx" configuration variable.

Keyword	Notes
-a	Disable file restart (crash recovery)
-b bps	Baud rate. Sets the DTE speed between the computer and the modem. Overrides "speed". Disregarded if locked with "uu.locked"
-d device	Device name or port number. May optionally include an I/O address and/or IRQ. See internal driver for the full syntax. Overrides "device"
-g grade	Single letter that sets the minimum grade for transferring jobs. Used only in dialout mode. Overrides "uu.grade"
-l	Do not check carrier detect. Needed for some direct connections with null-modem cables
-k pkt_size	Packet size for the "g" and "G" protocols. Overrides "fx.gPktSize". The packet size have a dramatic influence on the throughput, but values unsupported by your remote host might break the connection. See the "g" protocol
-n hostname	Changes the machine name as communicated to the remote host. Overrides "uucpname"
-o	Disable enforcement of time restrictions specified in "systems" and "permits"
-p permit	Use the name permit entry. See "permits" for the full searching algorithm used by FX
-r retries	Amount of retries before giving up calling each one of the current entries in "systems". Overrides "uu.retries". -r0 have special meaning and engages dial-in mode.
-t seconds	Time-out on scripts execution. Overrides "uu.time"

Keyword	Notes
-u login	Login or account name verified by the login sequence in dialin mode. This allows FX to verify that the remote host name corresponds to the login name as specified in "permits"
-v debug	Debug level for screen output. Overrides "uu.visual"
-w windows	Window size for the "g" and "G" protocols. Overrides "uu.windows".
-x debug	Debug level for file output. Overrides "uu.debug"
-z trigger	Sets trigger levels for 16550A UARTs. -z0 disables FIFO usage and autodetection.
-S	Disable variable packets ("g" protocol only).
-V	Enable status bar and direct video access.

Protocols

Protocol "f"

The protocol "f" is on the original UNIX UUCPs. It's designed for "flow con- trolled, error correction" 7-bit lines. This protocol is very inefficient for binary (8-bits) files. It has no internal flow control or error correction. The only recommended use (and the one it was designed for), is X.25 or other non 8-bit transparent lines.

Any error during downloads will result in truncating the file to zero length, this is to avoid invalid data if file restart is afterwards used. (Note: aborted downloads with CTRL C / CTRL BREAK are not truncated).

Protocol "y"

This protocol is new. It's extremely fast and efficient. As with the "f" protocol, it was designed for "error correction" (MNP-V42) modems, but it uses

8-bit bytes. It's probably the fastest protocol, but you need a "clean" connection between both ends.

Most new modems have hardware error correction, though they are not 100 percent infallible. The modems will take care of flow control and error correction. Note that FX UUCICO has no reliable way to ensure that an "error correction" connection has been established. We recommend you "force" MNP or V42, (see your modem manual). Because its a streaming protocol (no windows), "y" is very efficient on HALF duplex connections (USR HST and Telebit's PEP/TurboPEP).

Note that UUCICO "y" protocol is not the same as the Ymodem protocol.

Protocol "g"

FX UUCICO supports the full "g" implementations with variable sized packets up to 4096 bytes. The error management is very robust and efficient, which should result in a much better throughput in noisy lines.

Using a large window size (packet size * max windows), makes a big difference in "long delay" lines (as in long distance calls), especially in high speed modems. We do recommend the largest packet size supported by your host, up to 4096 bytes, and keep windows at 7.

Because UUCP protocols are used to transfer everything, not just the files, large packets are inefficient for very small files. This is why variable size packets are used, only the minimum packet size needed will be used for each packet.

Unfortunately many old UUCP implementations don't support anything but 3 windows, 64 bytes fixed packets. Some are so badly designed that they even accept other configurations but will crash instead.

The -k parameter governs the max packet size allowed. If the remote host requests packet sizes larger than 64, variable size packets will be used too. Only powers of 2 (from 32 to 4096) are valid: 32, 64, 128, 256, 512, 1024, 2048 & 4096.

Versions of UUCICO from other vendors offer varying levels of support. For instance, Waffle UUCICO supports 128, 256 and 512, but not vari-

able sizes. We note that many UNIX systems accept 128 (HDB based) and some of them 256. Taylor UUCP supports the whole range. FX UUCICO is fully compatible with it, and will work with any configuration. For better results you should ask your remote hosts which use Taylor to implement large packet size and enable short packets.

You must use the -S switch to connect with Waffle UUCICO at any packet size larger than 64 bytes. If you can't connect to a UNIX host, reduce the packet size to 64. Many old implementations will behave in very strange ways when trying to use large sizes.

The default packet time-out was increased to 20 seconds. If you use large packets and receive calls at low speed, check that the parameter "uu.delay" is not too short.

Protocol "G"

This is a variation of the "g" protocol used in SVR4 that is known to implement the full range of packet sizes. It doesn't use variable sizes, so it's not recommended for systems which support large packets on the "g" protocol.

Features of FX UUCICO

Internal "COMM" driver

UUCICO supports regular serial connections, intelligent DigiBoard cards, and Fossil drivers. It supports up to 115200 bps, hardware flow control, custom I/O port addresses and IRQs, and automatic detection of 16550A chips.

FIFO operation is controlled by the parameter -z. Use -z0 to disable auto detection and FIFO mode. For maximum reliability in multitasking systems use low trigger values.

To change the default settings of your serial port, append the new I/O address and IRQ level to the port number. You may specify one or both parameters, the missing one will keep the default value.

The syntax is port,address,irq. The address must be in hex.

Examples:

```
1,2F0,5

3,,7

COM2,2E0 4
```

You may use this syntax in any place that FX reads port devices:

1) "device" in FXUUCP.CFG

2) The port field in the dialer

3) the -d runtime parameter.

Note that when both are set, the port number is actually disregarded.

The PC has a de facto standard on the hardware settings of COM1-COM4. Most internal modems and serial cards come configured for those default values. Use ONLY if you know what you are doing, unexpected behavior may result trying to access the wrong hardware.

FOSSIL interface

When using a FOSSIL driver you MUST set the receiving buffer size larger than the packet size (/R parameter in the BNU version). The default of 1024 bytes is not enough for the "y" protocol. Note that a FOSSIL driver will usually slow your performance. Most FOSSILs do not support bps over 38400. For those that support them, you must lock the speed from the FOSSIL command line.

It's possible that some systems may experience erratic behavior with the internal com driver. Some old RS-232 boards, and some internal modems do not have a fully compatible UART. In those cases a FOSSIL driver (which may have been tested with these boards) may give better results. X00 and BNU are both available from the MSI HQ BBS.

File restart

FX UUCICO supports file transfer restart, compatible with UNIX SVR4 and Taylor UUCP implementations. This is similar to the crash recovery feature in ZMODEM. You can disable file restart with the parameter -a.

You may need to temporarily disable the crash recovery option when sending a file whose name matches an existing file. If UUCP is used to transfer a file, and the same filename is found in the destination directory, UUCICO will interpret this as a "recovery" situation, and APPEND to the existing file.

"E"xecution request

FX supports Taylor UUCP "E"xecution requests. While *wcGATE* does not generate "E" files, some other systems do, and this function may be of use if you are offering downline links to non-*wcGATE* systems.

These commands don't need the transmission of "X.*" files, resulting in a single file transfer per transaction instead of two. Note that some sites running Taylor UUCP will not send "E" commands. FX UUCICO will receive "E" requests automatically without any changes, FX UUCP is needed for sending them. The operation is completely transparent to the user.

Grades

Grades in UUCP links mean "priorities". By using different grades you can control which (uucp) jobs are more "urgent". Many sites implement this so they can make better use of the system resources. For instance, mail always gets assigned Grade "A" so that it will be sent/received at all hours. But news may be assigned a Grade of "B" (or something lower than "A") so that newsfeeds only happen during sessions which permit "B" traffic. Regular file sends/receives may be Grade "C" or lower.

All of this allows a site to arrange their traffic so that mail always comes and goes, but newsfeeds only happen at certain times, and file transfers only happen in the wee hours of the morning when system usage is lowest.

FX UUCICO has full support for grades, and it's compatible with the standard used in most UNIX UUCP hosts. Grades consist of a single letter attached to the (uucp) job file name when it is created. They are classified in reverse alphabetical order: "A" is the highest grade and "z" is the lowest. Grades are case sensitive in UNIX systems, but they aren't in DOS because DOS doesn't distinguish cases in filenames.

Calls made by UUCICO use the FXUUCP.CFG file parameter "uu.grade" and/or the -g command line parameter for establishing call grade. Calls received by UUCICO uses the grade requested by the caller. The "caller" (who's probably paying for the connection) ALWAYS governs the grade. UUCICO will not send jobs that have lower grades than specified, and the remote host is supposed to do the same.

When no grade is specified, all jobs are transferred.

FX UUCICO may also order the jobs by grade priority. See "fx.sortJobs"

If you do not use grades, UUCICO will create all jobs with decimal digits which have an even higher priority. You can still request the remote host for grade limits. A request for a determined "grade" will enable transmission of any job with the same or higher grade. This is not fully compatible with Waffle's UUCICO usage, but it is with virtually all other UUCP packages.

Grades are not very useful if the "caller" doesn't know the remote host convention. If you implement grades you should tell your BBS users and downline nodes what grades you use for mail and news.

UUCICO doesn't generate grades, because it doesn't create jobs. Rmail, rnews, uux and "uucp create" jobs as specified in the "mailgrade" and "newsgrade" configuration. Call your provider for specific information about grades.

File size negotiation

This is an extension to the UUCP protocol introduced by UNIX SVR4 and enhanced by Taylor UUCP. Each side tell the others the maximum file size it can accept, and the exact size in bytes of files before they are transmit-

ted. File sizes are limited by the Operating System, by the available space on disk and by configuration.

FX UUCICO can be configured for a maximum file size transmission and to leave a minimum free space on the spool disk. A cooperative party (a remote UUCICO that uses file sizes) is needed for full implementation.

There are two parameters in the "FXUUCP.CFG" file for size usage: "fx.maxfile" and "fx.freespace"

FX UUCICO will not send files larger that "maxfile". It will request the other side to not send files larger than "maxfile" or that will leave less than "freespace" on disk.

If the remote host doesn't understand file size negotiation, FX UUCICO will still check space on the local site, and reject any files which will leave less than "freespace" bytes the local system.

Caution: FX UUCICO will not do additional checking once the transmission of a particular file has begun.

Note that the remote side who is sending a file may react to the "denying for size reasons" in different ways. If it's not aware of the "file size" extensions it may NEVER send that file again even though you may have enough space on disk later. This is not a failure of FX UUCICO, but simply a feature missing from the host you communicate with.

If "fx.freespace" is not present in the configuration file, FX UUCICO will not check for free space on disk at all (which might improve performance on some systems). If "fx.maxfile" is not present the default is 32 Megabytes.

STATUS BAR

The switch (-V) enables a status bar at the top of the screen. This bar shows file transfer progress at real time. The exact format of the line changes if UUCICO doesn't know the length of the current file. When talking to another FX or Taylor UUCP, FX always knows the length beforehand.

To support this status bar, the -V switch changes completely the way it writes to the screen. Normally all screen output goes through DOS, but when the -V switch is on, FX writes directly on the video memory. This may have a negative impact on performance and compatibility.

Logging

Logging is essential for large sites administration. FX has several log files and allows you to configure the amount of information written to them. The location of all log files may be specified with "fx.logdir"

FX UUCICO creates two different main log files: "uucico" has the normal logging, and "debug" has all the testing messages and info. This has the advantage of not filling the normal log with line after line of debugging messages.

All logged messages are displayed on the screen as well. Each message has a level number assigned; only those with a lower or same level than the current debug level are logged. The debug level may be independently configured for the screen and for the log files. "uu.debug" and the -x switch, "uu.visual" and -v, configures the disk and screen debuglevel respectively. **Using high settings may substantially impair performance.**

Because using high debug levels may create a huge log, there is a parameter in the "FXUUCP.CFG" file that overrides the location where the "debug" file is written. You may want to put your "debug" file in a ramdisk, because otherwise the speed may slow down considerably when using higher debug levels (8 and up).

In addition to those, UUCICO also writes to the "net" and "uulog" files. The "net" log has a single line for each connection reporting total time, bytes and errors. Files transmitted are logged in "uulog", while the "fx.uulogLevel" option is similar to the debug level one.

Networking

FX UUCICO is fully networkable. You can run multiple UUCICOs concurrently over a network, without any kind of conflict between them. FX will manage all contention automatically.

From FX's point of view, networking means "sharing", running multiple UUCICOs in the same file system. Running it over a network doesn't necessarily imply sharing if used in single user mode. Multitasking two or more UUCICOs on the same machine has the same sharing effect as a network. You usually need use the fx.share statement in your FXUUCP.CFG file and load SHARE under DOS and peer to peer networks, it is normally not needed in NetWare and other Client/Server NOSs. It is implicitly loaded in WinNT and OS/2.

All configuration files are accessed in shared mode, which means that you don't need to make them "read only". Writable files and jobs are accessed in exclusive mode.

If you multitask more than one UUCICO in the same machine, you must take care that they do not try to access the same port at the same time. FX doesn't currently prevent more than one application from trying to share a port.

16550A FIFO UARTS

The -z switch controls the internal driver buffering for the FIFO. The syntax is -z<bytes>, where bytes is the trigger setting in the UART. To disable the FIFO UART entirely use -z0. Using any other value will bypass FIFO autodetection and FX will force the internal driver to enter FIFO mode. This may be helpful for not fully compatible UARTS and in some virtual environments, but without a FIFO it will produce transmission errors.

In some multitasking/networking environments, using the full FIFO buffers at high DTE speed may produce data loss. If you experiment "Rx" errors with the FIFO in full mode, you may "trigger" interrupts with FIFO buffers partially full. Using -z1 (which is not the same as -z0) will give the maximum reliability to the system.

Most setups don't need to adjust this parameter at all. It is used by the internal driver only, and ignored in FOSSIL mode.

Exit levels

If "fx.wQuirks" is on, FX UUCICO returns 0 when one or more connections were successful, otherwise it returns 1. Successful means that the

uucp handshake has been accomplished. These values can be overridden with the options "uu.exit" and "uu.fail" respectively.

When "fx.wQuirks" is off, FX returns 0 when the connection has been completed, and 1 when it should be retried. Reasons for retries could be failed scripts, loss of carrier, fatal time-outs, etc. If multiple connections are requested with -s all or -s any, the exit level reflects the status of the last connection attempted. Note that no connections due to no queued jobs is interpreted as successful.

FX may abort with higher exit levels, typically two or three, because of configuration or I/O errors. Examples are, invalid parameters, some file errors, or other unexpected situation.

Assistance

Accessing the public mailing list:

All users of FX products are invited and encouraged to subscribe to the mailing list. It was specifically created to be a forum for discussing installation, configuration and implementation issues.

To subscribe to fx list, you must send a message to the command server, fx-cmd@tau-ceti.isc-br.com. In the body of the message, issue the commands

```
subscribe fx-list
listname fxuser@somesite.dom
```
(the mail address you wish list materials sent to)

If you should choose to leave the list, send the same message to the command server again, substituting the word "unsubscribe" for "subscribe".

When reporting a bug, please include pertinent clips from your logfiles, or any other documentation which may assist the authors of FX UUCICO in resolving the problem.

Signature files

A text import feature is available during message entry to add commonly used phrases or other text within a message. It consists of placing the two "import characters" << in front of a filename containing the text to be inserted. The file must exist in the message database path for the conference, and must end in the extension .IMP to operate properly. The text file may be of any length, since only the import characters and filename are stored in the message base.

This is an easy way for you and your callers to append a "signature block" to the end of messages and newsgroup articles. Keep in mind, however, that proper network etiquette ("netiquette") frowns on signature blocks longer than four lines or so, and that not all newsgroups allow signature blocks. It's always best to inquire before using signature files.

The import characters must be located at the beginning of a line, immediately followed by the text file name, like this:

```
1: Here is my signature block, is it okay for this newsgroup?
2: <<SAM.IMP
```

The above example displays line 1 of the message followed by the text of the file SAM.IMP, which contains Sam's signature block.

```
Sam Robertson                internet: sam.robertson@mustang.com
(805) 873-2500 (Voice)                 (805) 873-2400 (DATA)
(805) 873-2599 (FAX)                   (800) 999-9619 (SALES)
```

To make this feature available to your users, let them create their own signature files, and upload them to the BBS. Ensure that the files are ASCII text, rename them if necessary so that the extension is .IMP, and copy them to the MSG path for your e-mail and newsgroup conferences.

Offering UUCP mail services to downline nodes

Your *Wildcat!* BBS can serve as a UUCP mail server, allowing you to echo newsgroups, mailing lists and Email to other systems. This is accomplished by first defining any downline hosts in the *MAKEGATE* UUCP Host setup section, then making the appropriate changes to *Wildcat!* so that downline nodes can connect and pick up mail using UUCICO.

Wildcat! configuration

Your first step is to define a security override called "UUCP". The only thing this profile *must* do is provide quick logon access. Save this new profile, and edit the user records of callers who will be picking up UUCP mail from you to add "UUCP" as a secondary profile. Refer to your *Wildcat!* Sysop Guide for more information on *MAKEWILD* and security profile definitions.

Create UUMAIL.BAT

UUMAIL.BAT is a batch file that executes UUCICO in "slave" mode, and exchanges UUCP mail with the downline node. Here is an example UUMAIL.BAT file:

```
cd \wildcat\gateway
uucico -r0 -k1024
```

Automatic execution of wcCODE program

Your next step is to verify that the automatically-executing wcCODE program LOGON.WCX is in your WILDCAT home directory. Here's an example of the source code for this program:

```
dim i as integer
if fastlogin then
  for i = 1 to 5
    if user.secondary(i) = "UUCP" then
      shell MAKEWILD.doorfilepath + "UUMAIL.BAT"
      hangup
```

```
      end if
  next
end if
dim today as datetime
currentdatetime today
if not fastlogin then
  displaygroupfiles
  select case today.t.number\60
    case 0 to 719
      print "Good morning @FIRST@,";
    case 720 to 1079
      print "Good afternoon @FIRST@,";
    case 1080 to 1440
      print "Good evening @FIRST@,";
  end select
  print " you are caller number "; nodeinfo.callernum
  if today.d.format("mm/dd") = user.birthdate.format("mm/dd") then
    if not displayfile("birthday") then
      beep
      print
      print "Happy birthday @FIRST@!"
    end if
    activitylog "Birthday Greeting Displayed"
  end if
  hellofiles
  checknewsletter
  checkbulletins
  quoteoftheday
  checkmailatlogin
end if
```

Scripting

Your downline UUCP nodes will be logging into *Wildcat!* with their user ID number rather than their name, preceded by the quick login switch (the * character). This will trigger the LOGON.WCX program, which detects whether the caller has secondary profile access to UUCP, then either resumes the logon process for normal callers, or starts UUCICO for UUCP mail transfers.

Callers with special UUCP override access can still log onto the BBS normally, by not using the "*" quick logon switch.

A proper script file for UUCICO to log into a *Wildcat!* BBS this way would look like this:

```
tomustang name? /L word /?
```

The SYSTEMS file for a downline node would look like this:

```
mustang Any g modem14400 tomustang 805-873-2400 *12345 secret
```

UUCP service providers

The following system information and sample scripts are provided by UUCP host providers who responded to our request for information.

Note: MSI has made every effort to contact all the providers listed below to verify phone numbers, service and pricing information. This information is subject to change, so be sure to verify pricing and terms of service before signing up with a provider.

Auldhaefen

Internet: info@aldhfn.org
Akron, OH
Voice: (216-) 745-9380

$25/month
$25 registration/setup

Clark Internet Services

Internet: info@clark.net
Ellicott City, MD
Voice: (800) 735-2258
(Maryland Relay Service) then ask for (410) 730-9764
Fax: (410) 730-9765
Data: (410) 730-9786

$30/month
$264/year
$25 registration

Colorado Supernet

Internet: info@csn.org
Golden, CO
Voice: (303) 273-3471
Fax: (303) 273-3475

$3/hour
$15/month minimum
$40 registration

Doyle Munroe Consultants (dmc.com)

Internet: info@dmc.com
Hudson, MA
Voice: (508) 568-1618
Fax: (508) 562-1133

Free thirty day trial period
Variety of plans starting as low as $5/month, will never exceed $150/month

HOLONET

Internet: info@holonet.net
Berkeley, CA
Voice: (510) 704-0160

$6/month minimum
$2-4/hour
$50 registration

IDS World Network

Internet: info@ids.net
East Greenwich, RI
Voice: (401) 885-6855

$15/month
$80/6 months
$150/year

InterAccess

Internet: info@interaccess.com
Chicago, IL
Voice: (708) 671-3469

$30/month
$2.20/hour
$100 registration

Maestro Technologies

Internet: staff@maestro.com
New York, NY
Voice: (212) 240-9600

$40/month
$35 registration

MCSNet

Internet: info@mcs.com
Chicago, IL
Voice: (312) 248-UNIX
Data: (312) 248-0900

$2.00/hr first 5 hours
$1.00/hr rest of month
$15/month minimum
$10 registration

MRNet

Internet: dfazio@mr.net
Minneapolis, MN
Voice: (612) 342-2570
Fax: (612) 342-2873

$49-$59/month
$135 registration

NETCOM

Internet: info@netcom.com
San Jose, CA
Voice: (408) 554-8649
Fax: (408) 241-9145

$25 - 60/month news & mail
$15 additional for FTP/Telnet
$50 registration

PANIX

Internet: hostmaster@panix.com
Voice: (212) 787-6160

$2/hour
$10 month

RAIN

Internet: rain@rain.org
Santa Barbara, CA
Voice: (805) 899-8610
Fax: (805) 899-2299
Data: (805) 899-8600

$50/month for news & E-mail
$200/registration
Registration includes domain registration, broadcasting and technical support

Spectrum Online Systems, Inc.

Internet: jimw@sosi.com
Colorado Springs, CO
Voice: (719) 576-6845

$1/hour
$125 month maximum
no setup fee

The Well

Internet: info@well.sf.ca.us
Sausalito, CA
Voice: (415) 332-4335
Fax: (415) 332-1927

$35/month
$1/hour
$50 registration

UUNet/UUNet Canada

Internet: info@uunet.uu.net
Falls Church, VA
Voice: (800) 488-6384
Fax: (703) 204-8001

$36/month
$2.60-5.60/hour

ZONE One Network Exchange

Internet: info@zone.net
Riverdale, NY
Voice: (718) 549-8078

$20 month (includes 10 hours)
$1 hour over 10 hours, $100 max
$55 registration

Satellite-based systems

Usenet newsgroups are also available via satellite, and *wcGATE* supports satellite services which send ".BAG" files. Incoming and outgoing E-mail and outgoing Usenet newsgroup articles are transmitted via regular telephone lines to any Internet provider.

Typically, the data receiver is connected to your PC much in the same way as a modem, and the incoming files are stored on disk. Incoming files are either uncompressed .BAG format, or PKZIP archives containing .BAG files. If your .BAG files arrived in a compressed PKZIP format, simply unzip them before you begin processing with *wcGATE*.

Both services listed below can supply all the hardware needed, including satellite antennas and data receivers. Technical specifications and pricing are available directly from the vendor.

PageSat Inc.

Internet: info@pagesat.net	$900 for hardware
Palo Alto, CA	$30/month
Voice: (415) 424-0384	
Fax: (415) 424-0405	

Planet Systems, Inc.

Planet Connect	$495 - $649 for hardware
Newport, TN	$30/month
Voice: (615) 623-9335	Lease plans available

Common questions and answers

Q: Can I FTP with UUCP or *Wildcat!*?

A: NO. FTP is a UNIX to UNIX site transfer method utilizing TCP/IP as its protocol. The two systems must be physically connected to the Internet itself. Using one of the many services on the Internet, you can send E-Mail requesting a file. If the file can be located, it will be sent back to you as E-Mail in a text format called UUENCODE. To convert the text file into a binary file, you will need a program called UUDECODE.

Your service provider can provide information on supplying FTP and Archie via e-mail.

Q: Can I TELNET with *Wildcat!* using UUCP?

A: NO. Telnet is a Internet site to site protocol using TCP/IP, and is not supported by *wcGATE*.

Q: The "To", "From" and "Subject" fields in the message headers in off-line reader allow a maximum of 25 characters of input. How can I send a message to someone whose e-mail address is longer than 25 characters? How can I use a subject longer than 25 characters?

A: Text entered in the first two lines of the message *text* in the format

```
To: j.r.bob.dobbs@ultimate.slack.org
Subj: instant answers to everything!
```

allows you to enter full-length address and subject information for your messages, and overrides whatever is in the message header.

Q: I get a message that says something like: "Remote end does not have an entry for you".

A: Either your provider has not yet configured your account for UUCP, or your UUCP Site Name was not entered correctly.

Q: The chat script in my SYSTEMS file doesn't finish.

A: The chat script in your system file must not contain any carriage returns —the entire script must be on a single line of text.

Q: I have a 9600 baud connection, but I'm getting less than 500 CPS throughput, and the transmission reports many errors and retransmissions.

A: Hardware handshaking may not be properly configured for your modem or system. This results in dropped characters and retransmissions. If you need help setting up your modem, feel free to call MSI Technical Support. Try using a fossil driver such as BNU or X00 to improve throughput.

Q: I use UUCICO under DESQview, and it said it couldn't find COM1. What's up?

A: The recommended DESQview setting for *Wildcat!* has "uses Com port" set to NO. Switch this to YES and UUCICO will be able to access the communication ports properly. This change in your DESQview settings has no harmful effect on *Wildcat.*

A Field Guide to Usenet Culture

The following excerpts are reproduced from Usenet archives, and contain important information for users new to Usenet culture. These text files have also been installed in your WILDCAT directory in a file called UUCP.NET, for posting as a bulletin or display file to your callers.

Rules for posting to Usenet

Archive-name: posting-rules/part1
Original-author: mark@stargate.com (Mark Horton)
Comment: enhanced & edited until 5/93 by spaf@cs.purdue.edu (Gene Spafford)
Last-change: 25 Apr 1993 by msb@sq.com (Mark Brader)

This message describes some of the rules of conduct on Usenet. The rules vary depending on the newsgroup.

Some newsgroups are intended for discussions and some for announcements or queries. It is not usually a good idea to carry on discussions in newsgroups that are designated otherwise. It is never a good idea to carry on "meta-discussions" about whether a given discussion is appropriate — such traffic mushrooms until nobody can find articles that belong. If you are unhappy with what some user said, send him/her mail, don't post it.

Before posting, think about where your article is going. If it's posted to a "comp", "news", "misc", "soc", "sci", "rec" or "talk" newsgroup, it will probably go to the USA, Canada, Europe, Australia, and many countries in Asia. Certain articles are only of local interest (e.g. used car ads) and it is inappropriate to post them to the whole world. Use the "Distribution" feature to restrict distribution to your local area. If you don't know how to use this feature, read "Frequently Submitted Items" in another article in news.announce.newusers. (Note, however, that some sites have broken software or improperly configured news systems, so sometimes use of a "Distribution" header may not work.)

Be considerate with your use of network resources. Your individual usage may not seem like much compared to the net as a whole, but in aggregate, small savings in disk or CPU add up to a great deal. For instance, messages offering thanks, jibes, or congratulations will only need to be seen by the interested parties — send these by mail rather than posting them. The same goes for simple questions, and especially for any form of "me too" posting.

Don't post announcements regarding major news events (e.g. the space shuttle has just exploded!) to news groups. By the time most people receive such items, they will long since have been informed by conventional media. If you wish to discuss such an event on the net, use the "misc.headlines" newsgroup.

Announcement of professional products or services on Usenet is allowed; however, since someone else is paying the phone bills for this, it is important that it be of overall benefit to

Usenet. Post to the appropriate newsgroup — comp.newprod — never to a general purpose newsgroup such as "misc.misc". Clearly mark your article as a product announcement in the subject. Never repeat these — one article per product at the most; preferably group everything into one article.

Advertising hype is especially frowned upon — stick to technical facts. Obnoxious or inappropriate announcements or articles violating this policy will generally be rejected. This policy is, of course, subject to change if it becomes a problem.

Some newsgroups are moderated. In these groups, you cannot post directly, either by convention or because the software prevents it. To post to these newsgroups, send mail to the moderator. Examples:

Newsgroup	Moderator	Purpose
news.announce.important	stargate!announce	Important announcements
comp.std.unix	uunet!std-unix	UNIX standards discussion
comp.std.mumps	plus5!std-mumps	ANSI Mumps standards discussion
comp.unix	zorba!modunix	Discussion of UNIX* features

Some newsgroups have special purpose rules:

Newsgroup	Rules
news.announce.important	Moderated, no direct postings, important things only.
misc.wanted	Queries, "I want an x", "Anyone want my x?". No discussions. Don't post to more than one xxx.wanted. Use the smallest appropriate wanted (e.g. used car ads to nj.wanted.) Requests for sources, termcaps, etc. should go to the "comp.sources.wanted" newsgroup.
rec.humor	Clean humor only; anything offensive must be rotated; no discussions — humor only. Discussions go in rec.humor.d
rec.arts.movies	Don't post anything revealing part of a movie without marking it (spoiler) in the subject.
rec.arts.*	Same as movies — mark spoilers in the subject line.

Newsgroup	Rules
news.groups	Discussions about new groups: whether to create them and what to call them. Don't post yes/no votes, mail them to the author
misc.test	Use the smallest test group possible, e.g. "test" or "ucb.test". Say in the body of the message what you are testing.

It is perfectly legal to reproduce short extracts of a copyrighted work for critical purposes, but reproduction in whole is strictly and explicitly forbidden by US and international copyright law. (Otherwise, there would be no way for the artist to make money, and there would thus be less motive for people to go to the trouble of making their art available at all. The crime of theft is as serious in this context as any other, even though you may not have to pick locks, mask your face, or conceal merchandise.)

It is generally considered rude to post private e-mail correspondence without the permission of the author of that mail. Furthermore, under copyright statutes, the author of the e-mail possesses a copyright on mail that he or she wrote; posting it to the net or mailing it on to others without permission of the author is likely a violation of that copyright as well as being rude.

All opinions or statements made in messages posted to Usenet should be taken as the opinions of the person who wrote the message. They do not necessarily represent the opinions of the employer of that person, the owner of the computer from which the message was posted, or anyone involved with Usenet or the underlying networks of which Usenet is made up. All responsibility for statements made in Usenet messages rests with the individual posting the message.

Posting of information on Usenet is to be viewed as similar to publication. Because of this, do not post instructions for how to do some illegal act (such as jamming radar or obtaining cable TV service illegally); also do not ask how to do illegal acts by posting to the net.

Please keep your signatures concise, as people do not appreciate seeing lengthy signatures, nor paying the phone bills to repeatedly transmit them. 2 or 3 lines are usually plenty. Sometimes it is also appropriate to add another line or two for addresses on other major networks where you can be reached (e.g., Internet, Bitnet). Long signatures are definitely frowned upon. DO NOT include drawings, pictures, maps, or other graphics in your signature — it is not the appropriate place for such material and is viewed as rude by other readers.

In preparing an article, be aware that other people's machines are not the same as yours. The following is a list of things to keep in mind:

- Except for source, keep your lines under 80 characters, and under 72 if possible. (most editors have a fill or format mode that will do this for you automatically)
- Right justified text may look "prettier" in some sense, but it is almost always harder to read than leaving ragged right margins; don't justify your articles.
- Most special control characters will not work for most readers. In fact, the space character is about the only one you can be sure will work consistently. Even tabs aren't always the same from machine to machine, and should be avoided. Many mail agents will strip or remap control characters.
- Pictures and diagrams should not use embedded tabs.
- Refer to articles by Message-ID, and never by article number.
- What you think is the previous article is unlikely to be so elsewhere.
- Submissions in a single case (all upper or all lower) are difficult to read.

In general, when a mailing to somebody fails, DON'T post a message about it! Think for a moment: you are trying to send something to someone on ONE system. Your message might go through (at most) TEN systems on the way there. Posting a message in the news sends it to many thousands of systems throughout the world! There is no way to justify adding to the news load of all those machines simply because you cannot determine how to get your mail through.

If your message is important, contact someone who knows more about the mail system and who might be able to help you get your message through. Your local system administrator, for instance, or the admin of the next site "upstream," might be able to help. You can also send mail to "postmaster" at one of the major Usenet sites. Almost all of these people would rather see an occasional plea for help in their mailbox than read another broadcast in the news system. If your message is *really* important, pick up the phone and try to call the other person.

How to create a newsgroup

Archive-name: creating-newsgroups/part1
Original-author: woods@ncar.ucar.edu (Greg Woods)
Last-change: 30 Nov 1993 by tale@uunet.uu.net

Requirements For Group Creation:

These are guidelines that have been generally agreed upon across USENET as appropriate for following in the creating of new newsgroups in the "standard" USENET newsgroup hierarchy. They are NOT intended as guidelines for setting USENET policy other than group creations, and they are not intended to apply to "alternate" or local news hierarchies. The part of the namespace affected is comp, news, sci, misc, soc, talk, rec, which are the most widely-distributed areas of the USENET hierarchy.

Any group creation request which follows these guidelines to a successful result should be honored, and any request which fails to follow these procedures or to obtain a successful result from doing so should be dropped, except under extraordinary circumstances. The reason these are called guidelines and not absolute rules is that it is not possible to predict in advance what "extraordinary circumstances" are or how they might arise.

It should be pointed out here that, as always, the decision whether or not to create a newsgroup on a given machine rests with the administrator of that machine. These guidelines are intended merely as an aid in making those decisions.

The Discussion

1) A request for discussion on creation of a new newsgroup should be posted to news.announce.newgroups, and also to any other groups or mailing lists at all related to the proposed topic if desired. The group is moderated, and the Follow-up-to: header will be set so that the actual discussion takes place only in news.groups. Users on sites which have difficulty posting to moderated groups may mail submissions intended for news.announce.newgroups to newgroups@uunet.uu.net. The article should be cross-posted among the newsgroups, including news.announce.newgroups, rather than posted as separate articles. Note that standard behavior for posting software is to not present the articles in any groups when cross-posted to a moderated group; the moderator will handle that for you.

2) The name and charter of the proposed group and whether it will be moderated or unmoderated (and if the former, who the moderator(s) will be) should be determined during the discussion period. If there is no general agreement on these points among the proponents of a new group at the end of 30 days of discussion, the discussion should be taken off-line (into mail instead of news.groups) and the proponents should iron out the details among themselves. Once that is done, a new, more specific proposal may be made, going back to step 1) above.

3) Group advocates seeking help in choosing a name to suit the proposed charter, or looking for any other guidance in the creation procedure, can send a message to group-advice@uunet.uu.net; a few seasoned news administrators are available through this address.

The Vote

Currently, the use of the Usenet Volunteer Votetakers (UVV) is strongly advocated for all newsgroup proposals. Ron Dippold <rdippold@qualcomm.com> co-ordinates this group. Contact him to arrange the handling of the vote. The mechanics of vote will be handled in accord with the paragraphs below.

1) AFTER the discussion period, if it has been determined that a new group is really desired, a name and charter are agreed upon, and it has been determined whether the group will be moderated and if so who will moderate it, a call for votes may be posted to news.announce.newgroups and any other groups or mailing lists that the

original request for discussion might have been posted to. There should be minimal delay between the end of the discussion period and the issuing of a call for votes. The call for votes should include clear instructions for how to cast a vote. It must be as clearly explained and as easy to do to cast a vote for creation as against it, and vice versa. It is explicitly permitted to set up two separate addresses to mail yes and no votes to provided that they are on the same machine, to set up an address different than that the article was posted from to mail votes to, or to just accept replies to the call for votes article, as long as it is clearly and explicitly stated in the call for votes article how to cast a vote. If two addresses are used for a vote, the reply address must process and accept both yes and no votes OR reject them both.

2) The voting period should last for at least 21 days and no more than 31 days, no matter what the preliminary results of the vote are. The exact date that the voting period will end should be stated in the call for votes. Only votes that arrive on the vote-taker's machine prior to this date will be counted.

3) A couple of repeats of the call for votes may be posted during the vote, provided that they contain similar clear, unbiased instructions for casting a vote as the original, and provided that it is really a repeat of the call for votes on the SAME proposal (see #5 below). Partial vote results should NOT be included; only a statement of the specific new group proposal, that a vote is in progress on it, and how to cast a vote. It is permitted to post a "mass acknowledgment" in which all the names of those from whom votes have been received are posted, as long as no indication is made of which way anybody voted until the voting period is officially over.

4) ONLY votes MAILED to the vote-taker will count. Votes posted to the net for any reason (including inability to get mail to the vote-taker) and proxy votes (such as having a mailing list maintainer claim a vote for each member of the list) will not be counted.

5) Votes may not be transferred to other, similar proposals. A vote shall count only for the EXACT proposal that it is a response to. In particular, a vote for or against a newsgroup under one name shall NOT be counted as a vote for or against a newsgroup with a different name or charter, a different moderated/unmoderated status or (if moderated) a different moderator or set of moderators.

6) Votes MUST be explicit; they should be of the form "I vote for the group foo.bar as proposed" or "I vote against the group foo.bar as proposed". The wording doesn't have to be exact, it just needs to be unambiguous. In particular, statements of the form "I would vote for this group if..." should be considered comments only and not counted as votes.

7) A vote should be run only for a single group proposal. Attempts to create multiple groups should be handled by running multiple parallel votes rather than one vote to create all of the groups.

The Result

1) At the completion of the voting period, the vote taker must post the vote tally and the E-mail addresses and (if available) names of the voters received to news.announce.newgroups and any other groups or mailing lists to which the original call for votes was posted. The tally should include a statement of which way each voter voted so that the results can be verified.

2) AFTER the vote result is posted, there will be a 5 day waiting period, beginning when the voting results actually appear in news.announce.newgroups, during which the net will have a chance to correct any errors in the voter list or the voting procedure.

3) AFTER the waiting period, and if there were no serious objections that might invalidate the vote, and if 100 more valid YES/create votes are received than NO/don't create AND at least 2/3 of the total number of valid votes received are in favor of creation, a newgroup control message may be sent out. If the 100 vote margin or 2/3 percentage is not met, the group should not be created.

4) The newgroup message will be sent by the news.announce.newgroups moderator at the end of the waiting period of a successful vote. If the new group is moderated, the vote-taker should send a message during the waiting period to David C. Lawrence <tale@uunet.uu.net> with both the moderator's contact address and the group's submission address.

5) A proposal which has failed under point (3) above should not again be brought up for discussion until at least six months have passed from the close of the vote. This limitation does not apply to proposals which never went to vote.

So You Want to Create an Alt Newsgroup

Archive-Name: alt-creation-guide

There are no Guidelines or Rules for creating alt groups. There is no one "in charge" of the alt hierarchy. The key to creating a successful alt newsgroup depends only on convincing the thousands of news administrators across the globe to carry your newsgroup. Here are some tips that will help you achieve this.

This article is based on common-sense and real-life experience. This is not an attempt to codify rules or guidelines for alt, but merely a guide to help people get the most out of alt, as well as a reflection of some established procedures.

This guide is split onto three parts. The first part covers some technical background as to why alt is the way it is, and how it fits into the larger Usenet.

The second section lists many common reasons proposed alt groups are rejected. Some are technical, and some are philosophical.

The third section includes some miscellaneous suggestions on making your alt group achieve the widest audience possible.

This guide is also available on the World Wide Web at: http://www.pop.psu.edu/0h/users/barr/usenet/alt-creation-guide

You can also get a copy by sending e-mail to "majordomo@pop.psu.edu" with the line "get file alt-creation-guide" in the body of the message.

1. Technical background

What is alt?

Contrary to popular belief, "alt" is not named because it is for "alternative" topics. Back during the dawn of the modern Usenet, it was decided that newsgroups should be created by following a clearly defined set of "Guidelines", involving formal discussions and a voting procedure. There was a significant number of people who felt that there should be a provision for a place where people could create groups without having to go through any discussion or votes. Thus alt was born. It is a hierarchy that is "alternative" to the "mainstream" (comp,misc,news, rec,soc,sci,talk) hierarchy.

"ALT stands for "Anarchists, Lunatics, and Terrorists'." - ziegast@uunet.uu.net (Eric Ziegast)

Votes? Did someone say vote?

Let me repeat. There are no votes in alt. Period. If you want to gather an "opinion poll" for your own purposes to see how popular the group will be, great. Do not post votes to alt.config. Every few months someone says "hey I've got a great idea for a newsgroup alt.widget, what do you think?". Someone responds "I vote yes!", causing a chain-reaction of posts to alt.config, lasting for days or weeks. These serve no purpose but to annoy readers of alt.config, and to distribute dozens of messages across the globe that should have ended up in someone's mailbox instead. Please, use a Follow-up-To: poster in your header and gather votes by e-mail. Then post a summary after a week or two.

News Administrators:

Alt newsgroups are not created everywhere all at once. Each site has a news administrator, who ultimately decides whether to carry a new newsgroup on that site. Nevertheless, for simplicity, many sites automatically honor all requests to create a new group and (by default) ignore all requests to remove groups. Newsadmins can be very busy people who don't need the hassle of hand-approving every group. Thus, alt newsgroups are not necessarily created in a way that is fair, or just, or logical. That's life.

Newsgroup Name Components:

A newsgroup name, e.g. alt.foo.bar-bar.baz, is made up of a series of dot-separated components, in this case alt, foo, bar-bar, and baz. The articles in newsgroups are usually

stored in your machine's directory hierarchy. Basically, every component of the newsgroup name corresponds to a directory or subdirectory of the same name, and that subdirectory typically takes up 512 or more bytes on the machine all by itself. Also, since accessing any group requires eventually reading the contents of the directory, if there are lots of subdirectories off of alt access for any single article in alt can theoretically suffer a performance hit. Also, some newsreaders are hierarchically organized. To read alt.folklore.computers, you select alt, then select folklore, then computers. If there are lots of needless top-level components (e.g. More than four levels deep), then this is more work for the person reading news.

What is a newsgroup name for?

A newsgroup is a collection of articles with a common purpose. A name for a newsgroup serves several purposes.

- It tells those who want to read the group that this group is for them.
- It tells those who do not want to read the group that this group is not for them.
- It classifies similar groups together so that:
  - ⇒ the group name can convey more meaning than just what can fit in 14 letters. (e.g. alt.music.monkees vs. alt.monkees)
  - ⇒ similar groups can be placed logically nearer to each other in sorted or hierarchical listings.
  - ⇒ It makes those who are interested in various aspects of a more general classification more able to find specific groups. (For example, those interested in philosophy can search for "philosophy" in the newsgroup name to find general groups as well as those about specific philosophies like alt.philosophy.zen)
  - ⇒ The top-level hierarchy is not a jumbled mess of thousands of newsgroups, with often ambiguous names.

Newsgroup Longevity:

There are some people who insist that once an alt newsgroup is created, it can never be destroyed, no matter what. These people make sure that whenever someone tries to remove a group, it gets re-created. Even if these people were not on the net, occasional mistakes (in such situations as people setting up new sites) can cause almost-dead newsgroups to get revived everywhere. Thus, alt groups are effectively immortal, at least for the foreseeable future; they can't be removed or even re-named. Alt groups never die, they just fade away.

2. Common Reasons Proposed Groups are Rejected

"Harmful" newsgroup names:

Newsgroup names which have components that are composed of the characters other than the letters "a" through "z", plus the characters "-"and "+" are considered non-standard and not encouraged. Some odd characters can tickle bugs in some software, or require news admins to make special modifications in order to carry the group. Newsgroup components must be non-empty. (like "alt..foo") One joke group, ".cabal", was created and lots of software mysteriously stopped working in bizarre fashion.

Component Too Long:

Some systems cannot handle a newsgroup name component that is longer than 14 characters. Thus alt.fan.bgcrisis (length of "bgcrisis" = 8) instead of alt.fan.bubblegum-crisis (length of "bubblegum-crisis" = 16). This restriction is becoming less and less critical, as software like INN handles this better. C news unfortunately enforces this limit, and makes it hard to accommodate exceptions. The author has no immediate plans to change this limitation.

Useless Components:

If you take away components at the end of the name, you should not be left with a directory name that is unlikely to have any other newsgroups in it. Thus alt.fan.bg-crisis instead of alt.fan.bubble.gum.crisis (other "alt.fan.bubble" newsgroups?). In other words, don't use a dot as a word separator, use a dash.

Joke/Revenge/Shock Group:

Because of newsgroup longevity (see below), newsgroups which are started just to get people to laugh at the name, and/or to get revenge on some specific person, and/or to shock people, are discouraged. They tend to generate a flurry of articles (sometimes) for a maybe even a month or two, but quickly die.

".word.word.word" Ending:

The first group was "alt.swedish.chef.bork.bork.bork". Since then, dozens of lookalike groups have been created. This was kind of funny at first (5 years ago) but the joke is old.

Top-Level Mess:

There are dozens of newsgroups named alt.something, where something is a very specialized subject. Wouldn't it be nice if there were some classification scheme for them? Well, there is; you can name your group alt.food.something, or alt.sport.something, or whatever.

alt.acronym groups:

Related to "Top-Level Mess" is the attempt to name the newsgroup based on some acronym. (alt.acm, alt.aclu) This is extremely unwise. First off, an acronym is not a good identifier of what a newsgroup is about. Groups like these tend to have a significant amount of traffic devoted to answering "hey, I just found this group alt.abd, what's this group about?" Weekly FAQ postings don't help. Remember alt is a worldwide hierarchy. Just because an acronym is popular in the US, doesn't make it recognizable to most people in the rest of the world. Second, acronyms are not unique. You'd be surprised how many trade acronyms there are, especially in the chemical and medical professions. One person's organization is another person's chemical or disease. Third, alt.acronym groups are hard to find when you're just browsing around. If they're interested in chemistry, people will search for "chem" in the newsgroup name, not "acs". (American Chemical Society) See below for suggestions.

Big Seven Move Threat:

Because of newsgroup longevity, many newsadmins will actually oppose creation of a group if you suggest you may want to move it to the "big seven" hierarchy (rec, soc, talk etc.) sometime in the future. Try to create it there first. On the other hand, some newsadmins will then suggest you try out an alt group before trying to create a "big seven" group.

Extremely Limited Interest:

Yes, alt groups can be created for subjects that the "big seven" hierarchy wouldn't touch, but if the discussion you propose is extremely faddish, or silly, or of extremely limited or regional interest, some newsadmins may oppose it.

More on "local" or "regional" groups in alt. Usually they are a bad idea. Remember that your articles will be traveling across the globe, on the disks of hundreds of thousands of machines. People in Saudi Arabia generally don't care much about great places to eat in Houston, Texas, USA.

Not Proposed in alt.config:

Some newsadmins will not create any groups that haven't been discussed in alt.config (and after waiting several days for the responses). Posting your idea for a new group to alt.config is a very good idea anyway. Someone may have already created the group you proposed, or something similar. They may also point you to a mailing list that you might not have known about. They also will probably tell you if your group is poorly named.

Eric Ziegast has this to say about alt.config:

"You don't have to take their advice, but then again, who wants to start a fight? At least when people discuss a group first in alt.config, news admins throughout the world can decide whether or not to accept/feed your group if/when it's created. If people like your

group suggestion, you will be considered a net.hero, and your group will likely exist until the end of time (which is currently January 2038 for UNIX)."

"If Other Silly Newsgroup Deserves To Exist, Then So Does Mine"

Since anyone can create a newsgroup in alt without fanfare, frequently anyone does. It's not a question of whether either newsgroup "deserves" existence. Think carefully about this point: you're willfully likening your proposal to all the silly and ridiculous newsgroups that already exist in the alt hierarchy. If you really want people to take you seriously, don't you think you can find a better argument?

"But No One's Forced To Accept It" Considered Irrelevant:

Sure, no newsadmin has to accept your group if they don't want to; but the newsadmins are going to curse you for the hassle of having to decide on it – when it gets created and every time it gets re-created. Also consider the consequence on the readers of the newsgroup. If their articles are only getting to a small minority of sites, is it even worth it?

"But All These People Agree" Considered Irrelevant:

You might get 20 people who haven't read this FAQ to agree that your newsgroup is a good idea. This isn't likely to convince anyone either, if any of the reasons above apply.

3. Some Positive Suggestions

Propose your group in alt.config.

Be sure to include the proposed newsgroup name or topic for the group in the Subject line. Listen to constructive criticisms. Wait at week or so before acting on it. News propagation is not instantaneous, it sometimes takes as long as a week just for an article to be sent out and a follow-up to be sent back. Beware, the "discussions" in alt.config can seem very petty, vindictive, and altogether unpleasant at times. Alt.config is frequented by news admins, news.wannabes, net.gods, and net.idiots. Sometimes it's a wonder that anything useful comes out of it, but the alternative is total anarchy and mob ethics. Look past the ad hominem attacks, the finger pointing, the name calling, and political posturing. There are actually a few people in alt.config with good ideas on creating groups.

Look for an appropriate place in existing alt hierarchies.

alt.binaries, .books, .comp, .culture, .fan, .games, .lang, .music, .politics, .religion, .sex, .society, and .tv are all fairly well accepted. Keep top-level hierarchies as broad as possible.

Put groups about sports under alt.sport.

Put groups about individual sports teams under alt.sports (plural).

Spell the newsgroup name correctly.

(or at least choose the most popular spelling :-))

And please, try using existing Big Seven newsgroups, alt newsgroups, or mailing lists before insisting on creating another alt group.

For example, don't create alt.drink.recipes when there's a perfectly good group already, rec.food.drink, with wider (and probably more well-informed) readership.

If you are trying to create a sub-topic of a high-traffic Big Seven group, try to attempt to get the Big Seven group split first before attempting an alt group.

For example, if you're tired of wading through rec.sport.golf for college golfing, don't try to create alt.sport.golf.college, try to create rec.sport.golf.college first. If the group is high-traffic, most likely readers will welcome a legitimate split.

If you want to create a group about something that has an acronym, try one of the following instead:

don't use the acronym, but rather a generalized name of what the acronym is about (alt.alt.society.civil-liberty instead of alt.aclu; spell out the acronym ; or put the acronym inside of a sub-hierarchy that clearly identifies what the group is about. (alt.autos.bmw instead of alt.bmw)

If your group is related to current events, then create the group under alt.current-events.*.

Note that alt.current-events.* is for short-lived current events, not extended discussions about some ongoing topic that just happens to be in the news today. Remember that there's already an existing group for current events: misc.headlines.

If your group contains binaries or other large files, create it under alt.binaries.*.

Newsadmins will thank you for it, as they typically expire these groups more quickly to compensate for their large size.

Once you decide that it's time to create your newsgroup, contact your local news administrator.

If you are a news administrator, then consult your news software documentation on how to issue a "newgroup" control message. The format of Usenet messages is defined in RFC 1036, which you may want to refer to. Alternatively you can modify someone else's control message if you forget all the syntax. Just look in the "control" newsgroup. It would be too hard to give a cookbook recipe for sending out a newgroup message, given the dozens of operating systems and news software programs out there. Contact a knowledgeable person at your own site - not me.

One thing that is nice is to include a "For your newsgroups file:" line in the body of the message, to automatically have news software enter a description for the newsgroup. Many newsreaders use this description. The format is:

```
For your newsgroups file:

alt.group.name.here          A one-line description
```

Make sure that those two lines above are each on the beginning of a line, and that the first line appears exactly as you see here.

Also, many sites do NOT automatically honor "newgroup" messages;

The news software at these sites will send mail to the news administrator, who will evaluate your request and decide whether or not to create the group. It may take a couple of days for the control message to propagate and be acted upon, so don't expect instant availability of the new group, particularly if you post the control message on a Friday night.

Epilogue by Mark Weber:

Here ends the lesson.

This may sound like a lot of rigmarole, and it is. The purpose is to discourage creation of alt groups that might be better off as mainstream groups, or that might be better off left uncreated.

Don't take this all too seriously, though. The "alt" net is the last remaining refuge away from the control freaks, namespace purists and net.cops (like myself) that maintain and enforce the mainstream newsgroup guidelines.

There is still some room for spontaneity out here on the "alt" frontier. Successful groups have been created without following these suggestions. Almost any non-forged, serious newgroup message will at least be considered by most news admins. Some groups have been created just on a whim. The concept behind the group better be good (or a least entertaining), though!

Credits:

Based on previous work by:

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"Common Reasons Why People Oppose Proposed Alt Newsgroups"

ccs@aber.ac.uk (Christopher Samuel)

"Creating a new "alt" group - guidelines" originally by markw@gvlf8.gvl.unisys.com (Mark H. Weber)

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"Welcome to ALT"

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